THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

Professor John Macmurray's thinking has always been done before he sits down to write. The result is generally the publication of a volume deceptively slim which might delude the unwary into imagining that it can be easily read and then tossed aside as of no great significance. Previous experience of John Macmurray has shown all too plainly that all wood, hay, and stubble have been cleared away in the writer's study, and that what he presents in print is in the category of gold, silver, and precious stones.

His latest work, *Conditions of Freedom*,[1] is typical of its predecessors in the simplicity, almost the unattractiveness, of its title. There are no neon lights in the vestibule, for all the illumination is within. It might also be remarked that Professor Macmurray has never conceived it to be the philosopher's task to restrict himself to those narrow and specialist problems so dear to the schools. He is a man with a message, and in this particular book it is a very heartening message. 'We are living through the first world revolution. . . . The change is of such an extent that every country is involved in it. It is so profound that there is no level of human experience which is untouched by it. If we seek its causes too locally or too superficially we shall fail to understand it, and our efforts to cope with it will be unsuccessful, leaving us with a sense of helplessness or despair. But if we grasp our situation in its entirety and have a courage that can match it, we shall realize that it is full of opportunity and hope, and that it moves towards a great emancipation. For its goal is the unification of the world in a common life.'

These words, in a chapter on Contemporary Conflicts, indicate the spirit and purpose of the writer, and they are followed by a statement that 'the driving force behind the process of our history is the impact of Christianity upon Europe, and the slow penetration of the Christian spirit through its habits of life and thought. For, in spite of temporary appearances I am convinced that the influence of Christianity, properly understood, was never more widespread and effective than it is to-day.'

[1] Faber and Faber ; 6s. net.

Professor Macmurray opens with a chapter on the Relativity of Freedom. All the good things we enjoy are rooted in the soil of freedom, and, if that soil lose its sweetness or its health, they will wither away. What matters alone is our faith in freedom, and if that is lost, all is lost. 'It is,' he says, 'the pearl of great price.' But while in one sense freedom is absolute, there is another sense in which it is relative. 'Freedom is at once absolute and relative : absolute, because if we were not free we should not be human at all ; relative, because this freedom lies always beyond our present achievement as the goal of our existence. It is at once the Alpha and the Omega of our humanity.' He goes on to point out that only by struggling to increase it can we hope to maintain the freedom we have already achieved. Then he observes that many seek to increase the realm of freedom 'along the technological road, through the increase of power.' This is to forget that we may also achieve freedom through the modification of our desires. Self-control is as imperative as the control of Nature if freedom is to be increased or even maintained. It is one of the conditions of freedom that we should seek a clear conception of the limits of human power, and remember that our increased power has to be set over against the vast field in which we have no power at all. 'Humility is the handmaid of freedom. It is the meek who inherit the earth.'

The next thing to note is that our freedom is that of individuals in relation, and the freedom of each is limited by that of others. Corollaries from this are that, in addition to the bondage that Nature imposes, we fall victims to our own fearfulness, both of these threats being mediated through our dependence on other people. 'The tyranny of natural necessity appears as the pressure of the economic system in our social relations ; and the fears that constrain us are fears of what others will think or say or do.' The second corollary is that man must accept his freedom from others ; and if they will not give it to him he cannot take it. Faith in freedom should not mean that we ourselves wish to be free : it should mean that we believe in setting other people free.

After this general survey, Professor MACMURRAY turns to the contemporary scene, where, as already noted, he sees great signs of hope. In spite of everything we *are* moving to the unification of the world in a common life. It should be noted that in this chapter he asserts that it is a mistake to imagine that war settles nothing. The First World War was an experience of disillusionment for the Western democracies, but 'to be rid of illusions is a liberating experience; for it is a revelation of the truth. In a few years it transformed the consciousness of a great part of mankind by making us aware of our interdependence. The founding of the League of Nations was a momentous event in the history of freedom.' It showed that liberty could only be defended by making it world-wide.

This point is further developed by Professor MACMURRAY'S declaring that modern conflicts are civil wars in a world which is already one society, that we ourselves can preserve our freedom now only by sharing it, and that the increase in human freedom in the last generation has been enormous both in its extent, and in its speed. 'The future is big with promise, and there is no reason for fainting or for despondency.'

In his last chapter on Freedom in Fellowship, Professor MACMURRAY has much to say about the primary place of religion, and particularly the Christian religion. 'No one who is seriously concerned about the future of freedom can afford to overlook or to underestimate Christianity.' He makes it quite clear that Christianity retains its pride of place in achieving and increasing human fellowship, and pays striking tribute to what it has already accomplished. 'In a very real and practical sense it is the only instrument for the achievement of a community of the world that we possess.' And again he repeats that 'the necessity of our time is the achievement of an effective world-order. This is not simply a desirable step forward in human progress. It is a necessity from which we cannot escape. We shall move from war to war, from catastrophe to catastrophe, until somehow it is achieved. The condition of freedom from now onwards is bound up with this. We have to establish freedom for all men in a single world order, or lose our own.'

The Maurice Lectures for 1949 at King's College, London, were delivered by the Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. W. R. MATTHEWS. The book form of the Lectures has now appeared under the title, *The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century*.[1] It consists of four compact chapters, comprising in all but eighty-five pages. As the author himself admits, the title is 'somewhat magniloquent,' and he asks us to find in the sub-title the more appropriate description.

The sub-title is 'An Essay on the Incarnation.' Dr. MATTHEWS thinks it is a reproach to modern theology that so little attention has been given, in its bearing upon the Incarnation doctrine, to the fresh light upon human personality which has come from the psycho-analysts and from psychical research. It is chiefly with this interest in view that he deals with his theme. The questions he raises, he is persuaded, ought to be asked, but he claims no more as an essayist here than tentative answers.

The first two chapters are an introduction to this particular inquiry. The first, entitled 'The Historical Jesus,' expresses his disquiet at the type of theology which so stresses the Christ of faith that interest in the historical Figure appears to be disparaged. As a firm believer in the need for a rational theology he opposes any such disjunction. The self-knowledge, the career, the mission of Jesus are of primary importance. The chapter following deals with 'The Classical Theology.' It shows the points of criticism that inevitably arose with regard to the 'Substance' theology of the early centuries, and there is in this setting an appreciative estimate of emphases in the correctives attempted by nineteenth-century theology.

To make the Incarnation doctrine freshly meaningful for the ordinary man, are there present-day categories that may help? The rest of the book is concerned with this. Take psychology, with its idea of the unconscious and especially 'the racial unconscious.' The reality here implies that our usual way of thinking about humanity is too individualistic. Or take telepathy, for which the evidence is so strong. It suggests that the separateness of selves is only part of the truth; at certain levels a fusion or mysterious rapport of persons can occur. Again, there is to-day in philosophy the emergence of dynamic categories. That is to say reality is being read not as substance with its emphasis on the static, but as 'pattern,' a moving pattern of 'events.' From all this, asks Dr. MATTHEWS, may there not come light upon much of the doctrinal language and valuation? Ideas like that of Irenaeus that Christ 'recapitulates' humanity, that of St. Paul that 'in him shall all be made alive,' and especially the thought of 'one bearing the sins of many'—all these may thus be brought relevantly to the modern consciousness.

[1] Cumberlege; 7s. 6d. net.

And the notion of ' pattern event ' puts us in the way of doing justice to Jesus in terms of His career and His cause.

The material presented along these lines in the Essay is complex, and whether it helps greatly towards supplying the need for a metaphysical basis for the Incarnation doctrine is at the end none too clear even to the essayist himself. From very tentative answers he turns in the concluding part to this positive judgment that when we consider the life experience of the God-man, the Person of Christ as a phenomenon in history, our best clue into it may be found in the idea of inspiration. Inspiration can be ' intermittent ' as poets and prophets have known, but in Jesus this feature would disappear. In Him intention and will turning to God would always receive the insight and power for the situation before Him. In Him was an indwelling of the Spirit ' as in no other.'

Although the writing is clear and readable, some of the paths of reflection followed are often intricate, but the reader will note the main purpose of the author, which is to combine an appreciation of the relevance of the orthodox doctrine with a deep empirical safeguarding of the thought of Jesus as the human person after God's image.

The Mind of Christ

II. The Novelty of the Gospel

By Emeritus Professor A. J. Gossip, D.D., LL.D., Kingussie

Our Lord did not start at the beginning of things. He was the heir of a long past, the inheritor of a growing revelation which came to its fullness in His teaching and Himself. ' These points are all mere commonplaces of Christian doctrine,' wrote A. B. Davidson, summing up the redemptive attributes of Jehovah in the second Isaiah. ' But it is of interest to see that they are here already in the Old Testament—at all events six hundred years before the Christian age. Christianity brought something absolutely new into the world, but much that it embraces was already prepared for it.' What is that something new in Christianity which has given it its dominance over so many minds and hearts ?

Gibbon, as everybody knows, set down as the main causes of the triumph of the faith these five things, the inflexible zeal of the Christians, the doctrine of a future life, the miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive church, the pure and austere morals of the Christians, and the union and discipline of the Christian republic.

These are shrewdly chosen. Yet surely there is more in it than that. For does not one feel uncomfortably about Gibbon what Carlyle said of Voltaire ' that he intermeddled in religion without being himself religious,' and ' warred against Christianity without understanding beyond the mere superficies what Christianity was.'

Take the Gospels in one's hand, and what is it in them that has struck men as nothing short of a new revelation, incalculably valuable, and to be found in this fullness nowhere else ? Only a few things can be treated in a single article. But (1) Horace tells us that it is a mistake to introduce a god to put things right unless matters are really desperate. They were desperate enough in this uneasy world of ours when, according to the New Testament, God Himself took action, and wrought salvation for us, paying down the cost of that in His own willing self-sacrifice.

There at once we are brought face to face with *the basic novelty of the Gospel—its amazing conception of God,* its certainty that His heart is with us, that He wants us to be saved, and is ready to do anything that even God can do, whatever be the cost of it to Him, to extricate His creatures from the ruin they have brought upon themselves.

No one wants to minimize the happy fact that there are shadows and adumbrations of this elsewhere. In India there are avatars, in Greece deities have come to the help of distraught and puzzled mortals ; especially in the Old Testament the compassion and tender mercy of God is continually underlined, and audacious hints are dropped of something further. ' For,' said He, ' surely they are my people . . . so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them.' Or, as a Psalmist has it, according to one reading, ' Blessed be God who daily beareth our burdens with us.' These things are there. But the religion built up upon the Incarnation, upon God's coming in to our human situation, is a far different matter, and

much more definite. How bold it is ! The doctrine of divine impassibility is not easy to reconcile with Scripture. For there, we are told that, if we would see God as He really is, we must look for Him, not like Maeterlinck, who thought he saw Him sitting smiling on a sunny mountain, high above the perturbations that harass us so. The Gospel feels its way through the thick darkness upon Calvary, and sets us down before the central cross, whispering, That is the express image of God's person, that is the Word made flesh, that is the nearest that your human mind can reach toward understanding somewhat of what God really is, and how He feels toward you ; and of the lengths that He has gone for very you. You mean as much to Him as that.

'Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip ? ' Christ once asked, taken aback by His follower's obtuseness. 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.' And what had Philip seen ? A man who held only a minor place in His own life, for He spent it ungrudgingly for others ; who seemed, indeed, unable to keep out of other people's troubles, but had to enter into these, and carry them along with those whom He would never see again ; one often tired by the acuteness of His sympathy ; for, quotes Matthew, 'He took our weaknesses, and bore the burden of our diseases,' a man who Himself felt that, if He were to save the world, He must suffer many things for it, hideous things, and who was ready, if that were God's will, to do so wholeheartedly, and did it. If this is the express image of God's person, if this is the Word made flesh, then, surely, there must be something akin to this in God. 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,' said Christ. To Him God's life was an unresting activity for others. 'It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.' All that even God can do has been done and will be done on your behalf. No heresy is more unscriptural than that which imagines a lesser kindly God, who is upon our side, seeking, often in vain, to interpose between us and the ruthless justice of the greater God incensed against us. It was God, says Paul, who was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not standing sullenly apart, cold and implacable. 'God so loved the world,' muses the Fourth Evangelist, 'that he gave his only begotten Son.' And, again and again, Christ Himself stands back to enable us to see past Himself to God the Father, the real author of the marvellous salvation there has been contrived for us. It was a very sane philosopher, Pringle Pattison, who works up to this climax in his fine book, *The Idea of God*. 'If we are to reach any credible theory of the relations of God and man, the traditional idea of God must be profoundly transformed. The speculative truth expressed in the central doctrine of the new religion has seldom been taken seriously—taken in bitter earnest. . . . What was the secret of Christianity, the new interpretation of life by which it conquered the world ? It was the lesson of self-sacrifice, of life for others—in the Pauline phrase, dying to live, in the words of Jesus, losing one's life to find it. If this is the deepest insight into human life, must we not also recognize it as the open secret of the universe ? No God, or Absolute, existing in solitary bliss and perfection, but a God who lives in the perpetual giving of himself, who shares the life of his finite creatures, bearing in and with them the whole burden of their finitude, their sinful wanderings and sorrows, and the suffering without which they cannot be made perfect. The ultimate conception of God is not that of a pre-existent Creator, but, as it is for religion, that of the eternal Redeemer of the world. This perpetual process is the very life of God, in which, besides the effort and the pain, He tastes, we must believe, the joy of victory won.'

There have always been minds who push away that whole conception as, on the face of it, a preposterous story, so obviously impossible as to be not worth considering, as an impious denying to God what makes Him God, as the most flagrant instance of our colossal human self-conceit and thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. For they challenge us to face the inescapable facts. Here are we, turned out by the million, lost in the crowd of creation, indistinguishable from our fellows at a very little distance, putting through the trivial nothings that make our lives, really tiny insects crawling about the bottom of this little pool of air, a handful of miles high, no more, in which alone we can live. A moment, and we are gone, swallowed up, we too, by that oblivion which has engulfed such multitudes whose lives were every bit as interesting and important to them as ours are now to us. A few years at the most, and the moss-grown lettering on our tombstones will have grown indecipherable ; and, wonderfully quickly, our name will have sunk into a soundless sound, conveying nothing to a single mind. And round us, out and still out, stretches an illimitable universe that won't go into human thinking and that stuns the imagination. Are we not told, as a very elementary fact, that light, travelling at the rate of some eleven million miles a minute, takes three and a half years, less or more, to reach us from the very nearest of the stars, the closest of our neighbours, and that the mass of them are vastly farther off than that, constellations heaped on constellations, and universe on universe, it seems. And somewhere in these immeasurable wastes there spins

an earth, to us central and huge, but really a tiny atomy of a thing, so unimportant, that, did it fall out of the sky, it would be missed no more than would one leaf fluttering earthwards in an interminable forest clothed in its midsummer glory. 'What is man,' mused a thinker long ago, gazing up into the starry skies, 'that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?' What indeed! Why should, how can, God Almighty bother Himself about us, and what befalls us? Be reasonable and think.

And, indeed, that seems staggeringly final. But, in reality, is it not very human thinking? In his day the author of Ecclesiasticus felt a great awe stealing over him as he too looked up into the night skies. 'As is his power, so also is his mercy,' he murmured with a huge sense of security taking possession of his heart. As if to say, God is all on the same divine scale. His power is not power as we know it, but omnipotence; His wisdom is not wisdom in our human sense of that, it is omniscience; and His love is not mere human love, though that can be very wonderful. But in God's love there is a length, a breadth, a depth, a height that pass our poor groping understanding. God can stoop lower than any man can stoop; God can bear more than any human heart could bear; God does exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or even think.

I could never have thought out the Gospel story. But, once it is given it seems very probable, and like a thing that God, being God, might do.

> Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst Thou—so wilt Thou!
> So shall crown Thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown—
> And Thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
> One spot for the creature to stand in!

(2) Another novelty of the Gospel that stares at us is *the audacious hopes it dares to harbour for mankind*; for any man, however drab and sinful and beaten he may be, who will accept its offers. As Christ says boldly, 'him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.' On which Bunyan, who leaned heavily upon that Scripture, comments, 'any him' at all.

Long ago Celsus jeered and flouted because, while other teachers cried, Come to me you who are worthy and clean and true, this strange Christ invites the fallen and beaten, and goes through the world with this unsightly rag-tag and bobtail of humanity trailing after Him. A strange Master, surely, so he mocked.

To which Origen gravely replied that it was even so. But that Christ did not leave them the rag-tag and bobtail of humanity, but, out of the material that others would have thrown away, fashioned a real man, able to stand up on his feet, and face his life with dignity and honour. What we need is a Saviour who can lift us up above ourselves; and nothing else will do. And, says Christ, this is what I am. Those who give themselves to Him, so it is claimed with confidence, find opening before them a door that leads into enormous possibilities, which, without Christ, are entirely beyond their reach.

It is, indeed, an uniquely lofty ideal of a human life that Christ lays before us.

Towards God He teaches childlikeness. For what a child is to its father, that each of us is to Almighty God, holding that secure place in His heart and plans. We can count on His care, and be sure of His affection. A mighty believer in prayer, Christ bids us take our problems and difficulties to God, seeking His counsel, and accepting it, confident that His will for us is far better than what we could will, as others beside Christ have told us. A bold saying. For dark and daunting things in life press in upon us. And so (far more) they did on Christ, as the Garden and the Cross make clear. Is it not strange that it was a man upon a cross, that last extremity of agony, who has convinced us that God is love. Really believe in such a God, says Christ, and carewornness and worry are ruled out. 'My peace' is what He offers us, a gracious, healing gift indeed. And of all the religions Christianity is the most joyous. 'My joy' Christ spoke about; and it was very real, so real as to evoke criticism from some of His shocked contemporaries.

As to those dark and incomprehensible things in life that look as if God had forgotten, Christ's reading of them is right heartening. It is not meaningless. It is not chance blown. There is purpose in it, love in it, God in it. There comes a day, He says, when all the trailing greeneries are ruthlessly cut from the vine, leaving it a mere maimed stump. But it is not a useless cruelty. That has to happen that the branch may bear more fruit. Which, surely, is the literal fact. How else could mankind have gained what gives it its splendour, except by having the virtues which are our glory beaten into us? You can't have courage if there is no danger to be faced; nor unselfishness if there is more than enough for all, and no one need stand back. Christ Himself, as in the Garden, did not always understand what was befalling Him. But He was sure that God was over all, that He is very wise, and trustworthy even in the darkness. 'To have a God,' says Luther, 'means that I trust Him with my whole heart.' Well, no religion is so valiant as Christianity. And it was this trust in God that did it. For surely William

James is right when he asserts that in the faith Christ taught there was something new.

'It is religion's secret, and to understand it you must yourself have been a religious man of the extremer type. If we compare Stoic with Christian ejaculations we see much more than a difference in doctrine, rather it is a difference of emotional mood which parts them. There is a frosty chill in Marcus Aurelius never found in a Christian piece of writing.'

But we have to live among our fellows, and our religion must colour and control all our relationships with them too. Indeed Christ, on occasion, taught that, in a sense, the righting of these ought to take precedence even of that reasonable service that we owe to God. So, perhaps, God thinks of this age of ours, largely non-churchgoing, but uneasy about social wrongs, with more kindness than some folk do. But why not both? If at the very altar you remember that your brother has ought against you, go and be reconciled to him, and then come and offer your gift to God. God will wait. Zacchaeus proved the sincerity of his change of heart by making restitution to those whom he had wronged. Now that, said Christ, is what I call a saved man. In the Judgment parable, the only accusations that are made, and the only commendations that are given, are due to the presence or the absence of neighbourliness and sympathy and kindliness of heart. For the rest life is to be used, not for one's self but for others and for God. 'Give yourself royally,' said Tyndal to Carlyle. It is the very call of Christ. Many have seen that. But none have set it down so vividly as He. To love those who love us is a very trivial achievement. Following God's example, we must be kind even to the unthankful, a hard thing for our human nature; must love even our enemies; though Christ kept a place in His own heart for anger. I suppose that what first and most arrests us in Christ's moral teaching is this insistence on unselfishness, and of a loving use of life. These are everywhere emphasized. But Hartmann is of opinion that even more original and revolutionary was the Christian teaching upon purity. 'Purity of heart is the primal Christian virtue. With this estimate Christian ethics opened up new roads, with this more than with its commandment in regard to loving one's neighbour. Not only did ancient ethics not know the value of purity in this sense, but by the greatest representatives of philosophy it was consciously set aside.' Humility, nowhere a popular virtue, is underlined. And so emphatic and reiterated is this call to forgiveness, that Samuel Johnson does not exaggerate. 'Of him that hopes to be forgiven, it is indispensably required that he forgive. On that duty eternity is suspended; and to him who refuses to practise it the throne of mercy is inaccessible, and The Saviour of the world has died in vain.' Courage and wholeheartedness win Christ's approval. A tepid creature, not one thing nor another, not bad, but yet not good, does not appeal to Him. Mere blamelessness meant very little to Him. He asked for something positive, active, dynamic. Rightly or wrongly, Mackail alleges that William Morris lived 'as in a dream, isolated, self-centred, almost empty of love or hate.' That is not Christianity.

So lofty is Christ's conception of what a human life should be that to attain to it what is required of us is nothing less than that we be transformed from this that we are into another being with another nature, living in a new way. So only is it possible. 'In Christianity,' says Berdyaev, 'the central idea is that of transfiguration, not justification. The latter has occupied too prominent a place in western Christianity.' Wonderful gift though God's forgiveness is, there are things offered us even more wonderful than that. We can grow up into the character of Christ. Donne says boldly that in the end 'I shall be so like God, as that the devil himself shall not know me from God, so farre as to find any more place to fasten a temptation upon me, than upon God, nor to conceive any more hope of my falling from the kingdom than of God being drawn out of it.'

How? 'You must be born again,' said Christ to a startled and protesting Nicodemus. And Christ does not ask for impossibilities. As the birds above us, wantoning fearlessly in the air, have been evolved from lowly crawling things pinned to the ground, so out of this uncouth and blundering thing we are has to be fashioned a new character, with new likes and dislikes, new possibilities, new powers, new standards, new dreams, new achievements, a character able to do what we have always failed to do, and to stand firm where disaster has too often overtaken us. And nothing less will do. If that is not resulting in us, then for us, thus far, the faith has failed. 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom.'

And what is the character toward which we should be climbing? Audaciously Christ takes God Himself as our model and example. 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' That sounds impossible. For God is God and we are only we, and between Him and us there is a great gulf fixed. Yet it is not unprecedented. Epictetus, *e.g.*, tells us grandly, 'We also are His offspring. If we once realize this kinship no mean or unworthy thought of ourselves can enter our souls. The sense of it forms a rule and standard for our lives,' and goes on into moving detail asserting that every thing we do we ought to do in union with and imitation

of God. Christ habitually lived on that level and wishes us so to do. The tenderness, the charity, the forgiveness of that God who makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and His rain to fall on the just and the unjust, must dawn and grow in us. As He has dealt with us so should we deal toward others, as that parable of the two debtors proves. Having been forgiven hugely, we too must forgive 'that ye may be the children of your Father in heaven.' 'Christian Ethics,' writes Brunner, 'is the science of human conduct as it is determined by divine conduct.'

At times Christ gives us Himself as our standard. 'I have given you an example,' He claims in the Upper Room. And again and again He says 'As I,' so you. Live with Me, watch Me, follow Me, and you will learn to act and think aright. That is immeasurably helpful. For, as Renan said, it is not a dream of the heart, but 'the realized ideal' that humanity desires. And this life has been lived.

How are we to attain to it? We see in it what we should be, but how? Well, first, beyond all question 'the real God function is to furnish a motive and injunction for practising what we know already.' In innumerable cases this faith has supplied the power required. In the East the Incarnation has been the chief motive; in the West the Cross. But everything about our Lord has played its part, and has enabled multitudes to rise nearer to the ideal offered us than they could have done without it. 'I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all men unto me,' said Christ with assurance. And multitudes have felt that pull upon their hearts and have been unable to resist it. The thing does work.

Further, if, with us, progress seems very slow, and the goal to draw hardly any nearer, the answer of the New Testament to that may be summed up in brief in Browning's valiant cry

'What's time? Leave Now for dogs and apes!
Man has Forever.'

'I am the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob,' quotes Christ, and adds 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living.' When He loves He loves eternally. In the Old Testament only some daring spirits were bursting through toward that truth. In the East the doctrine of transmigration opened a dreary and for most a hopeless prospect. In Europe it was a typical man who wrote that he had been musing on the possibility of immortality, and it had grown half-possible and then it faded away again, like the tissue of cobwebs that it was. But in the New Testament they are so happily confident, so calmly sure, that the ending end is victory for righteousness and with all evil overthrown. The time may be long, but the thing is sure. The watches of the night may tire out one's patience, and a soul can fall fast asleep. But he who endures to the end shall be saved, and see around him the new earth that is coming, really come at last.

Meantime, to aid us, we have the presence of the risen Christ. 'I will not leave you comfortless,' says Christ, 'I will come to you.' And He does. Anywhere and everywhere, but very vividly at the Sacraments, for instance. The original Scottish confession says, 'We allege that at the Sacrament we have made such conjunction with Christ as the natural man cannot conceive.' The Buddhists face a lonely road, thrown back upon their own resources. But we have a great Helper. Sometimes it is Christ Himself, sometimes it is God's holy Spirit who is promised us, that wonderful friend in need who brings us what we require when we require it, who leads and counsels, and upholds us. But always there are two of us, and our weakness is made perfect in that Other's strength. And all that is required of us is faith, a faith that dares to credit what is promised us, that throws itself on that, that makes experiment of this alleged sufficiency. What could be more scientific or rational or sane than that? If there is any *prima facie* evidence for it at all, surely common sense bids us to try the thing. There is nothing unique in the claim of Christ for that. Science practises it daily, and only so makes progress.

(3) But what Christ offers us is much more than a personal salvation. *It is the world that is to be saved; and Christ asks us to help Him to do that.* Selfishness, spiritual or no, reaps the reward of selfishness. And to Christ that is a cardinal sin. To us outsiders the religion of India, in the main, looks quite terribly self absorbed. The axis round which it spins, in Otto's phrase, is not the Christian axis. True, up in the North there are certain Mahayana Buddhists who have dedicated the long procession of lives that stretches out before them to the service of their fellow-men, asking that, if they have merited Nirvana, their Nirvana may be given to some tired soul, but as for themselves they choose to live on, life on life, working for others, till there is not one soul needing to be saved. How noble and how thrilling! Christ asks a like devotion and whole-heartedness from us, leans frankly on His followers, and looks to them to help Him to bring in that kingdom of which He speaks so often and so wistfully; gives them a real share, under Him, in the saving of the world. There is, indeed, only one Saviour. But the Vine bears, and can bear, only through its branches, and, without the branches, there can be no harvest. 'You are created,' wrote Plato,

' for the sake of the whole, and not the whole for the sake of you.' In every generation, as at the first, Christ is dependent, largely, on His people and turns to them with confidence. We are saved to serve. A self-centred Christian is a contradiction in terms. Yet many of us look like that; seem not to have realized that we are called to a real part in Christ's enterprise, that that is the greatest of our privileges and of His gifts to us. To be God's fellow-labourer, with our hands touching His at the common task; to be allowed to aid Him in His saving of the world around us. As Brunner puts it, ' We ought to regard ourselves, in spite of everything, as instruments which God has taken into His service, which He declares to be of use to Him, and to His purpose. This is the honour which we have of God; and no distress over our daily discoveries of our unfitness for this service should make us despair or even doubt. Justification by grace alone means that God has accepted us as recruits in His army; once this has taken place we can go forward bearing on our banners Fit for the service of God. We can be joyfully and proudly conscious of this dignity, with the pride of humility which knows that we possess this value only as a gift.' Or as he has it in another place, ' God calls the sinner just as he is, into His service. God does not consider this particular person, just as he is, too bad for His service. The call which reaches man in his actual sinfulness, places him, sinful as he is, in the service of God. For if man were to try first of all to make himself fit for this service, he would never do anything at all.' That, surely, is the very height of grace—to be allowed to help Christ in His saving of the world.

Literature

THE PENTATEUCH PROBLEM

It is generally known that what is commonly called the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis of the origin of the Pentateuch is encountering very heavy weather, and that a number of attempts have been made during the past thirty years to replace it with something more satisfactory. One such attempt is that of Emeritus Professor Edward Robertson, now the Librarian of the John Rylands Library. Over a number of years (1936–49) he has published a series of papers in the Bulletin of the John Rylands Library. These, however, are known to few except specialists in the field. They have now been published in one convenient volume under the title *The Old Testament Problem with two other Essays* (Manchester University Press; 21s. net).

Since the original articles were published at intervals of a year at least, there was inevitably some overlap in their contents. Briefly, as Professor Robertson sees it, the Hebrews entered Palestine as an organized community possessing a nucleus of law comprising the Decalogue and perhaps the Book of the Covenant. Between the settlement and the rise of the monarchy this organized community became decentralized and split up into a number of religious communes, each with its own independent sanctuary. At these sanctuaries there developed divergent though related traditions and laws. When the people were reunited under a king, it was necessary to bring about religious unity. For this purpose ' a summary of legislation, comprising a codification, after due investigation and review, of the law codes of the sanctuaries, was prepared under Samuel's guidance and immediate supervision . . . This new code was the book of Deuteronomy and was designed to be the standard law book of the centralized administration.' The remainder of the materials in the Pentateuch—the J, E, P of the critics—comprising the literary productions of the various sanctuaries, was arranged on a definite plan, and added to serve as a preliminary to the Book of Deuteronomy either at the same time as this great law code was composed or shortly after. At the disruption of the monarchy the observance of the Deuteronomic law fell into abeyance. It was rediscovered in the reign of Josiah, and once more ' all-Israel ' was reunited under the same code.

It will be observed that Professor Robertson's reading of the situation is distinctly conservative, though he no more asserts Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch than the normal critic does. Whether his construction is right or wrong is simply a question of historical evidence. That Samuel is said to have ' told the people the legislation (*mishpat*) of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before Yahweh ' (1 S 10^{25}) seems an inadequate foundation for the theory that it was he who presided over the composition of Deuteronomy, and what we read of the early prophets does not accord very well with the assumption that they were the authoritative interpreters of the newly codified law at

the various sanctuaries. Nevertheless, Professor Robertson has drawn attention to something which has been insufficiently appreciated by critics, namely, that many of the duplications, inconsistencies, and contradictions in the Pentateuch may be due to contemporary differences of ideas and usage, rather than to different stages of development which must be arranged in time sequence (J–E–D–P).

The whole Pentateuch-critical situation is now exceedingly confused, and it must strike any observer that those who agree in rejecting the Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis differ very widely in their judgments as to what should replace it. Professor Robertson, apparently, would make the Pentateuch, in its completed, *written* form, very early. On the other hand, Uppsala scholars, who would also do away with J, E, D, and P in the ordinary meaning of those sigla, lay special emphasis upon the predominantly *oral* character of the early materials, even to supposing that comparatively little was set down in writing until the post-exilic period.

C. R. North

MARTIN LUTHER

If Luther did not actually utter the valiant words of the title *Here I Stand* (Abingdon-Cokesbury; $4.75), and there seems to be some doubt about the matter, he might well have done so, for they are significant of his character, positively and negatively, of his greatness and his littleness, his steadfastness and bravery over against his obstinacy and inconsistency. The words are revealing also as to the point of view which Dr. Bainton takes in this most welcome addition to the many existing lives of Luther. The book is splendidly produced, profusely illustrated, and extensively documented, and it gives us a presentation of Luther which is unified and convincing, avoiding unrestrained panegyric on the one hand and unfair criticism on the other, and conveying the impression that it is based on the authentic recording of contemporaries rather than on the not-too-confident speculations of historians of a later age. The illustrations deepen this impression, for the author has made a hobby of collecting mediæval and renaissance woodcuts and engravings and scatters them generously over his pages.

He is economical in his use of details, and prefers to give us a continuous narrative rather than a series of disjointed episodes, but the book is far from being a dry-as-dust abstract of a life. The author starts with Luther's experience as a monk and shows the deep seriousness of his cloister life, thus illustrating the suggestion that the reformation sprang not so much from the actual corruption of the Church as from a sense of frustration on the part of the earnest souls who felt that she did not fulfil her promise of spiritual satisfaction. With great skill Dr. Bainton shows the almost fortuitous widening of Luther's original reforming aims, and felicitously quotes Barth's illustration of a man on a winding staircase laying hold of a rope to steady himself and being startled by the clanging of a bell. For Luther an attack on Indulgences broadened into opposition to the whole position of the Roman Church, its materialism, its reliance on works, its claim to possess spiritual treasure available for distribution to both the living and the dead; its interpretation of the Sacraments, and its insistence on the supremacy of the Pope. From negation Luther advanced step by step to construction, and Dr. Bainton shows how great his contribution was towards providing a constitution for the Church, a reinterpretation of the Sacraments, a reform of the liturgy and the translation of the Bible into the vernacular. He holds that his incipient Erastianism was adventitious rather than deliberate, that his main concern was religious, and that he was inclined to advise submission to the civil power only because this seemed to him to be the only way to avoid disorder within the Church. His dubious attitude to the Peasants' War is skilfully treated and shown to fall into line with this general policy.

The chapter on Luther's family life is a delightful sketch, but we are not sure that it increases our admiration for him. Katherine von Bora had sometimes a difficult time. The description of Luther as a translator of the Bible is a fascinating chapter. He was tirelessly and resolutely thorough in the carrying out of his aim 'to make Moses so German that no one would suspect he was a Jew.' His labours in the formation of the catechism and the liturgy are treated with the highest appreciation. Dr. Bainton explains Luther's hold on the German people by pointing out that, for example, in England no one had anything like his range. The labours which he carried out almost single-handed were distributed between Tyndale (for translation), Cranmer (for liturgy) and the Westminster Divines (for the catechism).

The last sixteen years of Luther's life do not seem to have been so fruitful as the earlier years. Dr. Bainton does not free him from blame in regard to his attitude to the matrimonial problems of Philip of Hesse, and is hardly successful in explaining away his sometimes excessive political subservience and his growing severity in the treatment of Anabaptists and Jews. But on the whole the vigorous style and vivid portraiture of this book leaves us with an attractive picture of the great German leader, one who 'so trembled

before the face of God that he had no fear before the face of man,' and yet, through all his trembling and moods of depression, was upheld by a joyous faith in the loving kindness of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

W. S. URQUHART

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

The New Testament against its Environment, by Professor Floyd V. Filson of Chicago (S.C.M.; 6s. net), is the third volume in the S.C.M.'s new series of 'Studies in Biblical Theology.' Chicago boasts some 'wild men' in theology as well as in other parts of its manifold life; but Floyd Filson is one of their very soundest men, and we on this side of the Atlantic ought to know more of his work.

This little book of his prints three lectures he gave recently in Oberlin. His aim is by setting the New Testament against its first-century background, Jewish and Gentile, to bring out the true distinctiveness of its message. The first theme is the New Testament doctrine of God. It is because the New Testament conception of God is Christ-centred that we can find nothing like it in either Judaism or Hellenism. The life and work of Christ, especially the Risen Christ, give us our clue to the character of God. Christian theism is Resurrection theism. Lecture two handles the New Testament understanding of history. As history, it is, at once, selective, interpreted, faith-dimensioned and God-purposed; and the distinctiveness of the New Testament view is that it sees all history in the light of the fact of Christ, who is the clue to its meaning. In Lecture three, which treats of the life of God's people, the thing which distinguishes the Christians from their neighbours, Jewish and Greek, is found to be their 'Spirit-led-ness.' United and inspired by the Spirit, this life is unlike the code-ridden life of the Jew or the polytheistic, disintegrated life of the Gentile.

Sometimes we find the thread of Filson's argument a little elusive; sometimes we think he is a little unfair to British scholars (*e.g.*, Hebert); and we are quite sure that he over-works the word 'climactic.' But the value of the book is that it introduces us easily to various crucial issues in present-day Biblical study—Bultmann's attempt to 'de-mythologize' the New Testament, the Old Testament as Volume I in the *Heilgeschichte* which the Bible records, the Christo-centric philosophy of time which we associate with Tillich, Cullmann, etc. As an excellent cross-section of Biblical scholarship at the middle of the twentieth century, it deserves to be widely read.

A. M. HUNTER

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

The 'Torch' volume on *Galatians* (S.C.M. Press; 6s. net), from the pen of Principal John A. Allan, of Knox College, Dunedin, has just appeared. It is short; it is crisply written; and it gets to the living heart of Paul's religion. Here is the minimum of lucid and rich comment needed to make 'the Epistle of Christian Freedom' intelligible, relevant and timely for the ordinary Bible reader.

I do not share all Principal Allan's views on critical and theological problems. I do not believe that Gal $2^{1ff.}$ describes the Apostolic Council of Ac 15, nor am I persuaded that 'justification by faith' is the key to Paul's religion. But I am moved to admiration at his skill in elucidating the hard passages in Paul's letter (for example, the allegory of Sarah and Hagar) and his ability to make the right and telling comment on great verses and phrases. For an instance, let me take this on Gal 5^{6}: 'In these words, says Bengel, stands the whole of Christianity. This is one of the great New Testament statements of the essence of true religion. There is . . . a confronting of the soul with the great simple realities of faith and love and the redeeming work of Christ. . . . It would be well if we had the courage to bring all our ecclesiastical and theological differences into the searching light of this verse. If "circumcision" is to be regarded as in effect covering everything in religion that is not directly associated with faith and love, it covers very many things that we make a great pother about in Church circles.'

Or take his comment on 'the adoption of sons' (Gal 4^{4}): 'Paul uses the imagery of adoption to mark the fact that we are sons of God by grace, Christ is a Son by nature.'

There are a good many more like these in the book's ninety pages. Ministers wanting to take their young people through an Epistle of Paul in Bible Class should make a note of this commentary. If the succeeding volumes on Paul's letters are all as good as this, we are going to be very lucky. What a sad paradox it is that in an age when we have more and better aids to Bible study than ever before, our people should take a great deal more interest in football coupons than in the Scriptures.

A. M. HUNTER

St. Francis in Italian Painting, with 39 illustrations, by Dr. George Kaftal (Allen and Unwin; 12s. 6d. net), is one of a series of books entitled 'The Ethical and Religious Classics of East and

West.' It is the aim of the editors of the series to ' bring out the essentials of religion in this age of doubt and discouragement.' He would be a dull soul indeed who could not write an attractive book about ' the little poor man of Assisi.' The book begins with a scholarly and well-balanced account of St. Francis' life. There follows a very valuable evaluation of the early lives of St. Francis. But undoubtedly the second half of the book is of the greater interest. It contains thirty-seven chapters from the biographies of St. Francis by Thomas of Celano or St. Bonaventura, each of them being illustrated by reproductions of paintings by Italian masters from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century. The book concludes with a useful bibliography. The book is at once the production of genuine scholarship, splendid art and real devotion. It is beautifully produced and printed and is cheap at its price.

Dr. A. Mitchell Hunter—for many years Librarian at New College, Edinburgh—published in the early years of his ministry at Cardross a scholarly book on *The Teaching of Calvin*. It appeared in 1920, and a review in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES then paid tribute to its worth, as writing and as exposition. Now, after a long interval, a new and revised edition has been issued (James Clarke ; 15s. net), and the decision to do this was fully justified. It is true that during the past few decades studies in this field have opened up many fresh and unexpected paths. Yet this book has a distinct place of its own to fill. There are indeed few, if any, books in English which do what it accomplishes so well. For students of theology in particular this volume can fulfil a most fruitful service. In clear, concise, and well documented form it presents an all-round survey of the essential positions determining the great reformer's thinking. Dr. Hunter uses extensively the theological writings and the letters of Calvin, for his purpose is 'to let Calvin speak for himself.'

With God and His Friends: More Musings for the Quiet Hour, by the Rev. Francis B. James (Epworth Press ; 5s. net), is a selection of articles by the author from the devotional column, ' The Quiet Hour ' in ' The Methodist Recorder.' Each article begins with a text from Scripture, a quotation from a devotional writer, and another quotation from a devotional poet. It is in fact from its layout that the book receives its title, for St. Theresa once said, ' The company of God's friends is a good way of keeping near Him.' It is good to be reminded of lovely sayings. Francis Paget said, ' Through humbly and simply doing what we can, we retrieve the power of doing what we would.' Samuel Rutherford said, ' I am taught in this ill-weather to go on the lee-side of Christ, and to put Him between me and the storm, and I thank God I walk on the sunny side of the brae.' ' Duties are ours ; events are the Lord's.' Mr. Charles Morgan said, ' Though to be a prisoner may close doors, it may also open windows.' The meditations themselves are simply, graciously, and helpfully written.

Dr. Norman H. Snaith is putting all learners of Hebrew in his debt by his ' Study Notes on Bible Books.' The latest is *Notes on the Hebrew Text of Genesis XL–XLIV* (Epworth Press ; 6s. net). Practically every word is parsed and explained, with full references to the standard grammars. These little volumes are especially valuable in these days when accurate Hebrew lexicons are hard to obtain. If there are any words not accounted for in Dr. Snaith's Notes most of them may be found in the Vocabulary to the McFadyen–Davidson Grammar.

The Rev. J. Trevor Davies, B.D., Ph.D., gives us a thought-provoking and helpful book in *Lord of All* (Independent Press ; 7s. 6d. net). After an introductory chapter setting forth Christ's rightful claim to rule over all our activities—not only our worship in church but all we do in work or leisure —he selects a number of incidents from the Gospels and shows their relevance to ourselves, to our situation, or to our temptations. Thus the nine lepers who did not return to give thanks for their cure are examples not so much of ingratitude but of ' taking things for granted,' and we are like them if we do not give thanks to God daily for good normal health. Each study is rounded off with a short prayer. The whole is so richly illustrated and so simply yet well written that we wish the book the circulation—and the reading and digesting—which it deserves.

Canon Loane in *Oxford and the Evangelical Succession* (Lutterworth Press ; 15s. net) has selected five outstanding figures in the history of the Evangelical Revival throughout a period of about 150 years. He seeks to trace their inner spiritual development and to show how they took their place in a succession of influential leaders in the English Church. The title is rather a misnomer, as none of the five had any very close connexion with Oxford, two of them had no connexion at all, and Daniel Wilson, who was the only one holding an official position, felt himself very much of an alien in University circles towards the close of the eighteenth century.

The best known of the five are George Whitefield, John Newton, and Daniel Wilson. The author successfully conveys the thrill of the outstanding

success of the first-named in his open-air preaching activities, but there is in the narrative too much itinerary, too many statistics, and an unrelievedness of panegyric. The story of John Newton is most attractively told, from the years of his adventurous youth to the quiet influence of a London pastorate, so peaceful as to be almost an anti-climax to the preceding stormy periods. The relations with William Cowper are skilfully indicated, and no quarter is given to the adverse suggestion that Newton was an evil genius in the poet's life. Perhaps the most interesting of the short biographies is that of Daniel Wilson, who, reversing the temporal pattern of Newton's life, after a comparatively uneventful career in Oxford and London, spent the last twenty-five years of his life as Bishop of Calcutta—in journeyings and perils oft, revealing qualities of statesmanship in the organization of the Indian dioceses, and steadfastness in combating certain evils which were threatening the early stages of the development of the Church in India. The Cathedral in Calcutta is a lasting memorial to Wilson's energy and devotion.

Emeritus Principal H. M'Lachlan, M.A., D.D., Litt.D., who was Head of the Unitarian College, Manchester, and has already a dozen scholarly works to his credit, has now issued *Essays and Addresses* (Manchester University Press; 21s. net). We may regret and even deplore such a vague and colourless title, yet it is exact enough as descriptive of the contents and origin of the book which consists of a number of Essays and Addresses delivered to various audiences, or sent to magazines. For the most part the items are clearly connected as studies of the scholarly attainments and works of what may be called the Nonconformist Left Wing—mostly Unitarians. We have admirable accounts of individuals and of Academies; and Dr. M'Lachlan effectively shows how utterly baseless is the contention of some Anglican dignitaries that till the middle of the nineteenth century there was no clerical scholarship in England outside the National Church.

Old Testament Studies, volume I, by Mr. William R. Newell (Moody Press, Chicago; 413 pages), is a revised and enlarged edition of 'Lessons given at Union Bible Classes,' and deals with the books from Genesis to Job inclusive. These studies made a great impression upon the large audiences in the United States and Canada to which they were delivered some fifty years ago. Their purpose is homiletical and devotional, and their standpoint that of strict verbal inspiration.

Canon C. J. Stranks has published a brief series of talks given to a Diocesan Clergy School, entitling the book *Our Task To-day* (Mowbray; 2s. 6d. net). The Bishop of Blackburn contributes a Foreword and we agree with him when he says that, among the many books which keep appearing on the subject, this one has distinctive merits. It deals with the cause of our present despondency, what we can do, and the vision and the power. Our distresses, the Canon says, are unquestionable; but he reminds us that despondency was rife a century ago. He is right in holding that in Sunday Schools the rising generation is 'approaching life with a healthy seriousness and a willingness to sift out the truth which promises well for the future.' The Holy Spirit has not deserted us, but we must see that this movement in the hearts of men and women is not in vain. 'We must fit ourselves and our organizations to be worthy of the times.' The Church must labour not only to save individual souls but to influence the secular society in which men live. The corporate voice of the Church must speak plainly to our rulers. There will be no power without prayer. And so on. For its small size this is indeed a notable exposition of the hopeful way out of our distresses.

Professor William Robinson of the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, has published his Joseph Smith Memorial Lecture on *The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. (It costs 1s. 3d. and may be had from Overdale College, Selly Oak.) The title suggests the contents: it is a study in the Christian Doctrine of Hope. Among the Christian virtues Hope has been something of the Cinderella, and Professor Robinson is concerned to rehabilitate her among her sisters. His main thesis is that two or three verses with a Platonic ring have misled scholars into supposing that the Epistle to the Hebrews replaces primitive Christian eschatology by Platonic idealism. By a careful study of the Epistle he successfully exposes this fallacy. No less than the other New Testament writers *Auctor* looks for the Day of the Lord and a final Consummation. But primitive Christian eschatology is both realized and futurist. If Hebrews expects a Last Judgment and final victory of God, it no less realizes that the decisive battle has already been fought and won. So the Lecture ends on the note that Cullmann and John Baillie have been stressing in their recent books. If we are not to have an emaciated eschatology we must needs retain the old Christian symbols of the End.

The Psalms, volume III, is a series of 'Notes' on Psalms ci. to cxxxiv., by the Rev. W. Graham Scroggie, D.D. (Pickering and Inglis; 12s. 6d. net), and is a continuation of volumes I and II which have appeared during the past year or two. It is intended primarily for devotional study.

The theological and critical standpoint is conservative, the Psalm titles being taken as regulative on questions of authorship.

The Glories of our Lord (Pickering and Inglis; 5s. net), by Mr. H. C. Hewlett, who writes from New Zealand, is a reverent and careful study of the Person of Christ as He appears in Scripture. The titles of the chapters are, His Sonship, The Theophanies, His Eternity, His Deity, His Incarnation, His Humanity, His Holiness, His Transfiguration, His Crucifixion, His Exaltation, His Priesthood, The Lamb. The author depends for his expositions on a scriptural literalism and gives no account of the Christ of the Creeds.

Pascal's Short Life of Christ (Princeton Theological Seminary, N.J.; 75 cents) is No. 5 of the Princeton Pamphlets series. The Introduction and Translation are from the hands of Emile Cailliet and John C. Blankenagel, who describe the 'Short Life' as one of the movements of an awe-inspiring unfinished symphony, whose other two movements are the 'Thoughts' and the 'Mystery of Jesus.' These three works were first sketched by Pascal for his own use, and the one now before us illustrates Pascal's methods in the study of Scripture.

Sir J. Ninian Comper has written a little book of great learning which ranges over wide tracts of history and personal experience, not all of them strictly relevant to the subject as indicated in the title, *Of the Christian Altar and the Buildings which Contain It* (S.P.C.K.; 5s. net). As the Bishop of London remarks in the Preface, 'this doyen of our ecclesiastical architects' sets out to talk about the altar, but his work becomes a 'travelogue' and 'almost an autobiography.' None the less it is refreshing reading, and we note the author's observation that in the matter of architecture even 'a knighted architect' (like himself) may be 'a blind leader of the blind and more dangerous than a cheery Philistine.' Beginning with an account of the high place given to beauty in the Christian Church, as revealed by the history of the altar, the book touches on a great variety of subjects, such as cancelli, the ciborium, veils and frontals, lights, flowers, and bells (to take almost at random a few titles of sections).

Men of God, by Mr. P. C. Sands, late Headmaster of Pocklington School ('Handbooks for Teachers,' S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d. net), has as its subtitle 'Material and Narratives for Lessons on the Old Testament for Senior Classes and Adolescents.' Mr. Sands is an experienced writer on Biblical subjects and he has embodied the results of modern scholarship on his material. He has concentrated attention upon those Old Testament characters who contributed most to the religious life of the Hebrews, and has tried to stress their value in the Christian era. The materials are divided into three sections for each character selected. The first section is introductory, with notes on background. The second is the story itself, told vividly and with abundance of illustration. The third section supplies questions and answers for class-work. No one Agreed Syllabus is followed closely, but the studies in general cover a good many sections prescribed by such a Syllabus for senior pupils.

Father Hubert Northcott has the right to teach us about prayer. With diligence he has sat at the feet of the masters in it, and studied the prolific literature with care. His book includes a helpful bibliography of some five pages. Moreover, what is better, he himself has practised prayer one feels with success. And now he has given us the fruit of his knowledge and experience in *The Venture of Prayer* (S.P.C.K.; 14s. 6d. net).

The Bishop of Ely in his Preface confesses it is not an easy book to read. That is not wonderful, if true. For it is not a simple matter for experts to condescend to men of low estate. This book leads us into the deeps, as the headings of a few of its chapters prove—Mental Prayer, Contemplation, The Dark Night, The Final Stages, and the like. Father Northcott is a knowledgeable and sure-footed guide.

Religion and the Common Man, by the Rev. E. C. Urwin (S.C.M. Press; 7s. 6d. net), has much worth-while reading behind it, and a red-hot sympathy and thinking and enthusiasm in it.

In the Prologue the problem faced is bluntly stated: 'Can the common man be emancipated, or as I prefer to say, old-fashioned though the word be, "redeemed" and attain betterment of his life and lot, without religion and the grace of God which it is the business of the Christian faith to mediate to him? If he can be so "redeemed" without it, then the critics are right; the sooner the delusion that he needs religion is dispelled . . . the better. But if the truth be that he needs religion, and cannot be redeemed without it. . . .' There is no manner of dubiety about the answer given, as the ending of the book makes clear.

'Beatrice Webb, in "My Apprenticeship," tells how she turned at the crucial point of her life

from the service of God to the service of men. The antithesis is a false one. The love and service of God are the springs from which, for the Christian, issues the call to the love and service of men. "I have loved the people," said Henry George, "and that led me to Christ as the people's best Friend and Saviour." "And I loved Christ," replied Cardinal Manning, "and that led me to the people for whom Christ died." Therein lies the real hope of the common man.'

The Rev. Gordon Rupp, Tutor in Church History at Richmond College, Surrey, is recognized as holding high rank among British scholars who have specialized in study of Luther. During the last thirty years there has been great scholarly activity in this field, and diligent, fruitful investigation of all that casts new light on the development of Martin Luther's thought, and on the man himself. Even recent Romanist writers take a different view of him and his significance than Grisar or Denifle did. Mr. Rupp is familiar with the work of all his fellow-labourers, and in his *Luther's Progress to the Diet of Worms* 1521 (S.C.M.; 9s. net) he gives us the fruits of his research. It is not a bulky volume, but it is full of meat elegantly presented in crisp, vivid style. It is a book which no student of Luther can neglect.

From the S.C.M. Press comes a very useful small book, *The Church in the Purpose of God* (2s. 6d. net). It is the work of the Rev. Oliver S. Tomkins, the Secretary of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches, and is written as a preparatory for the World Council of Faith and Order which is to meet at Lund next year. The history of the recent ecumenical movement is lucidly sketched. The agreements reached and the difficulties encountered are set forth with fairness. In appendices we are supplied with outlines for study and discussion, a very full bibliography and lists of members of the Commission on Faith and Order and the ten theological commissions engaged on Reports to be submitted at Lund. By all Christians who desire to follow the ecumenical movement with understanding the book will be found most helpful.

In his last years Professor S. A. Cook was the doyen of Old Testament scholars in this country. His literary output over a period of more than fifty years was voluminous and continued without pause until almost the time of his death. His enthusiasm was contagious and nothing endeared him more to his fellow-scholars than the eager readiness with which he encouraged juniors. In celebration of his seventy-fifth birthday he was presented with a collection of Essays by members of the Faculties of Divinity and Oriental Languages in the University of Cambridge. He did not live to see them in print, but they have now been edited by his successor in the Regius Chair of Hebrew, Professor D. Winton Thomas, and published as *Essays and Studies Presented to Stanley Arthur Cook* (Taylor's Foreign Press, London; 25s. net).

The Essays are twelve in number and are preceded by a Select Bibliography of Dr. Cook's writings. His interests extended over a wider field than that of specialist Old Testament studies, and this is reflected in the Essays themselves, which include items on Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit subjects. It is usual for *Festschriften* to be miscellaneous and discursive, and that limits their sale. In this particular case, however, the very variety is an attraction. The book contains much curious learning, and the Essay on Edward Lively, one of Cook's predecessors in the Regius Professorship of Hebrew at Cambridge (1575–1605), by Mr. E. I. J. Rosenthal, contains some amusing passages. But apart altogether from its contents, there must be many who held 'S.A.,' as he was affectionately called, in such regard that they will delight to have this memorial of him on their shelves.

Many have a feeling that Protestantism is in sickly condition. Protestants are, many of them, so dogmatic and so opposed to each other. Broadly, all largely agree in their criticism of Papalism, but sects criticise other sects almost as strongly. Protestantism seems to be essentially negative, not sure any more as to what it believes or what ought to be proclaimed. Professor Hugh Thomson Kerr, junr., Ph.D., who holds the Chair of Systematic Theology in Princeton, begins with that in his book *Positive Protestantism* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia; $2.50). Protestantism must, he holds, cease to be primarily a negative and speak as a positive as it did in the sixteenth century. And its 'positive' is just the gospel. The sub-title of his book is 'An Interpretation of the Gospel.' It was rediscovery of the primitive gospel that set the Reformation going. To rediscover the gospel as our age needs it, and to preach it, is the only helpful way out of the impasse which Protestantism seems to have run into. It is an interesting, challenging, and vital book, fitted at many points to provoke heart-searching among the Protestant churches.

Living Issues in Biblical Scholarship

The Church in the New Testament

By the Reverend W. F. Howard, M.A., D.D., F.B.A., Principal of Handsworth Theological College, Birmingham

Any student who looks back over the course of Christian thought during the last half-century must be struck by the change which has taken place in the position accorded to the Church in the study of the New Testament. When the present century opened all the emphasis was upon the Kingdom of God. This was generally interpreted in accordance with the current utopian optimism as an influence pervading society in its progressive approximation to the Christian social ideal. B. W. Bacon, writing in 1920, could still hear the cry of many of his contemporaries, 'Social salvation is the need of our times. Back to Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount!' (*Jesus and Paul*, 55). On the theological side this tendency was partly due to the stress laid upon the Kingdom of God by Ritschl, and its finest expression can be read in Harnack's *What is Christianity?* The three chief defects in this presentation of Christianity, to which Sanday drew attention in his critique of this book, were Harnack's failure to take due account of the Church, of doctrine, and of worship. The pendulum has swung far in the other direction in recent years; so far indeed that Dr. J. A. Findlay in the Preface to his Fernley-Hartley Lecture last summer expresses a 'growing feeling that the best modern evangelical theology is in danger of creating a new kind of Pharisaism, interested in Christian ideas, such as the doctrine of the Church or the "theology of crisis," rather than in common earthly men and women' (*Jesus and His Parables*).

It is an ironical comment on this complaint that one of the two most stimulating causes of this recovery of the teaching about the Church in the New Testament was the Swarthmore Lecture given in 1912 by Dr. Findlay's predecessor in the 'Jesus of History' School, T. R. Glover.

The Nature and Purpose of a Christian Society made a profound impression by its insistence upon the need of corporate fellowship in the worship and witness of the Church. Some of his hearers protested against this testimony in a Lecture given to the Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. As one of them said, 'It is all an appeal to the practice of the historic Church, whereas the Quaker differentia is, for the most part, an appeal against the historic Church, "the apostasy," in fact, to quote George Fox.' Nevertheless the words of so sturdy a Dissenter as Dr. Glover commanded respect in some quarters where ecclesiastical claims would have found no hearing.

The second great influence in creating this revived interest in the Church was the Ecumenical Movement (as it has come to be called) which may be dated from the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. The imperative need to offer a united Christian front on the Mission Field has brought about a changed approach to discussions about the origin, nature, and purpose of the Church. The organism rather than its organization is the centre of interest. Whilst all consultations about ways and means for promoting federation and union must involve discussions about the ministry and the sacraments, church order and government, the supreme concern is to learn what the New Testament can teach us about the origin and essential purpose of the Church.

As another paper will deal with the Ministry in the New Testament we shall limit ourselves to the Church as the Christian Society, the Fellowship of the Spirit, the Body of Christ, and shall ask such questions as, Did Jesus found the Church? When did it come into being? Is it heir to the people of God under the Jewish dispensation? Under what forms is it presented to us by different writers in the New Testament?

A great literature has grown up around this subject. Some famous books are more concerned with the development of its constitution, more especially of the doctrine of the ministry. Such books are T. M. Lindsay's *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries* [1902], the Cambridge *Essays on the Early History of the Church and the Ministry*, edited by H. B. Swete [1918], and B. H. Streeter's *The Primitive Church* [1929]. In this article we shall call attention to four books which are mainly concerned with the New Testament conception of the Church.

The starting point for any modern study of this subject is F. J. A. Hort's *Christian Ecclesia*. Although these lectures were delivered in Cambridge in 1888 and 1889 they were not published till 1897, four years after the author's death. The title itself is significant, for Dr. Hort deliberately avoided the use of the word Church because 'it

carries with it associations derived from the institutions and doctrines of later times.' He starts with a lexical study of this word. The word ἐκκλησία was common in classical Greek and was derived from the verb ἐκκαλέω which did not mean the calling out of a small number from a larger body but simply the calling of the citizens of a Greek town out of their houses by the herald's trumpet to summon them to the assembly. So in the LXX from Deuteronomy onwards it was used as the usual rendering of the Hebrew word *qāhāl*. Two Hebrew words are found in the Old Testament for the gathering together of the people of Israel: *ʿēdhāh* and *qāhāl*, the former being translated in the R.V. by 'congregation' and the latter by 'assembly.' In the LXX συναγωγή is almost always used to render *ʿēdhāh* and in the first four books of the Pentateuch also to render *qāhāl*. In the Gospels the word ἐκκλησία is found but twice, each time in Matthew. In 18^{17} it must refer to the Jewish local community to which the offender and the injured person both belonged. In 16^{18} the case is different. Assuming this saying to be an authentic logion of Jesus we can best understand it as meaning 'on this rock I will build my Israel.' 'The Ecclesia of the ancient Israel was the Ecclesia of God; and now, having been confessed to be God's Messiah, nay His Son, He could to such hearers without risk of grave misunderstanding claim that Ecclesia as His own.' In other words, Jesus will rebuild the old Ecclesia, the 'People of God,' on a new foundation. In virtue of the personal faith of Peter and those whose spokesman he was, 'the Apostles became themselves the first little Ecclesia, constituting a living rock upon which a far larger and ever enlarging Ecclesia should very shortly be built slowly up, living stone by living stone, as each new faithful convert was added to the society.' If it is pointed out that in the prophets who write of the 'People of God' neither *ʿēdhāh* nor *qāhāl* is used, but *ʿām* (λαός), yet there is a passage where *ʿēdhāh* (συναγωγή) is used with this meaning, Ps 74^{2}: 'Remember thy congregation, which thou didst purchase of old, didst redeem to be the tribe of thy inheritance.' It is significant that when Paul adopted this language in his address to the elders at Miletus (Ac 20^{28}) he said, 'Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which he purchased with the blood that was his own.' He inevitably changed the word συναγωγή into ἐκκλησία. In the Greek-speaking Church this was the word that most perfectly expressed the conception of spiritual continuity with the 'People' of the old covenant. The tribal and national associations of λαός were no longer congruous with the world-wide mission of the Church of the new Covenant, whilst the rivalry of Church and Synagogue by this time ruled out the term συναγωγή.

Enough has been said to show how carefully Hort examined the evidence of words to recover the ideas which lie behind the use of Ecclesia in the New Testament. But this famous book is valuable for the way in which the conception of the Church is traced where the word itself is not used. The title by which the Twelve are referred to in the earliest stage of the tradition is 'disciples.' Now 'wherever we find disciples and discipleship in the Gospels, there we are dealing with what was a direct preparation for the founding of the Ecclesia.' Faith and devotion to the Lord, exercised in union and brotherly love, formed the conditions for the future life of the Church. 'It was the strength . . . of St. Peter's discipleship which enabled him, leading the other eleven disciples and in conjunction with them, to be a foundation on which fresh growths of the Ecclesia could be built.' Hort continually emphasises the representative character of the Twelve. They sat as disciples, rather than as apostles, at the Last Supper. They were representatives of the whole Ecclesia there, not of an apostolic order. As apostles they were witnesses of the Lord and His Resurrection, and so represented the apostolic mission of the Ecclesia of the future. In the Acts we see the one ἐκκλησία multiplied as many ἐκκλησίαι spring up under the preaching of fugitive disciples, of evangelists and of apostles. The unity is preserved, yet not by organization but by the attachment of the several communities to a common founder and by St. Paul's determination to keep the churches of his foundation in brotherly fellowship with the mother church in Jerusalem. The Primitive Church started with no constitutional framework. 'New occasions teach new duties,' and the principle of the higher expediency under the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the community led the Church to meet each fresh need as it arose. The first step forward had to do with administration, not rule. The seven deacons were chosen and appointed. Quite early elders seem to have been entrusted with oversight in the local churches. As we go on to watch the development in the Pauline Epistles, reaching its climax in Ephesians with the doctrine of the Church as the Body of Christ, we are reminded that in the New Testament no offices higher than elders are to be found. We are concerned with spiritual functions rather than with a system of graded officials. In Hort's memorable words, 'In the New Testament the word ἐπίσκοπος as applied to men, mainly, if not always, is *not* a title, but a description of the Elder's function.' There is, however, a practical though limited recognition of

the monarchical principal in the position held by James in Jerusalem and to some extent in the temporary functions entrusted by Paul to Timothy and Titus, according to the Pastoral Epistles.

When Dr. Hort gave these Lectures over sixty years ago the Synoptic Problem had scarcely raised its head in this country, and St. John was cited with the same authority as evidence with the earlier Gospels. We should therefore expect a radically different treatment of this subject by Karl Ludwig Schmidt, a leading member of the School of Form Criticism. His important article 'Ecclesia' was published in Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* in 1936, and has now been translated into excellent English by Mr. J. R. Coates and published by A. and C. Black under the title *The Church*. Professor Schmidt starts from a lexical study which largely confirms the findings of Hort. He prefers the translation 'gathering,' but recognizes that we cannot dispense with the word 'church' in view of its rich associations. The word ἐκκλησία can be applied to a local fellowship, but 'the Church is not a great community made up of small communities, but is briefly present in its wholeness in every company of believers, however small.' In this the teaching of St. Paul agrees with the primitive conception found in Acts. The explicit teaching of the Apostle about the doctrine of the Church is given in Colossians and still more in Ephesians, which K. L. Schmidt regards as 'thoroughly Pauline—whether it was written by the apostle or by one of his disciples.' The language of this Epistle with its highly developed metaphors is to be accounted for by the writer's use of Gnostic ideology and vocabulary to meet a controversial situation of a special character, just as the Fourth Evangelist rebuts the Gnostic perversion of the Gospel by showing that Christianity is the true Gnosis.

The most surprising part of K. L. Schmidt's contribution is his vindication of the authenticity of the two Matthæan logia in which the word ἐκκλησία occurs. He gives reason for thinking that the Aramaic term used by our Lord in Mt 16^{18} and 18^{17} was *k*^{e}*nīshtā*, since the equivalent *k*^{e}*nūshtā* is used in the Sinaitic Syriac version both for the Christian Church and for the Jewish synagogue. The absence of the word 'church' in any other recorded saying of Jesus is irrelevant, for the idea is present in many terms, drawn mostly from the Old Testament: for example, 'flock' (Mt 26^{31}, Jn 10^{16}; cf. 1 Co 9^{7}), 'little flock' (Lk 12^{32}; cf. Ac 20^{28}, 1 P $5^{2f.}$), 'sheepfold' (Jn 10^{1}), 'my sheep,' 'my lambs' (Jn $21^{16f.}$). All the early traditions represent Jesus in closest association with a company of disciples. The two questions now to be answered are: (*a*) How could Jesus while proclaiming the Kingdom of God have founded a Church? (*b*) How is the Church related to the eschatology of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom?

(*a*) The words spoken to Peter relate to his confession of Jesus as Messiah, and are closely followed by words announcing the sufferings of the Son of Man. This title recalls Dn 7 where it is used in an inclusive sense, the individual so described representing 'the people of the saints of the Most High.' In the last words spoken by Jesus about His passion at the Last Supper this title is again prominent (Mk 14^{21}), with a clear allusion to the Suffering Servant of Is 53. Messiahship involves the Kingdom of God. The 'People of God' are as necessary to the Messiah as the flock is to the Shepherd. At the Supper Jesus 'appoints to His disciples a kingdom' by the covenant of His blood. that they may 'sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (Lk $22^{29f.}$). K. L. Schmidt points out that 'this complex of ideas (Jesus, Messiah, Son of Man, Disciples, Community, Lord's Supper) leads directly to the Pauline and sub-Pauline doctrine of the ἐκκλησία, which on the one hand is "from above," and on the other is "the Body of Christ," just as Christ is at the same time highly exalted and present in the community. The question whether Jesus Himself founded the Church is really the question concerning his Messiahship.'

(*b*) The Church and the Kingdom are not identical, for Jesus promised the Kingdom to His Church, and the Early Church claimed to be the ἐκκλησία but continued to proclaim the Kingdom. After Easter the Church was aware that the new age had dawned, for events were taking place which were to mark the 'last things.' Even the individual member of the ἐκκλησία belongs to the coming age because he is a justified sinner.

The third book is the Fernley–Hartley Lecture for 1938, Dr. R. N. Flew's *Jesus and His Church*. Much of the ground covered in the two books already considered is surveyed afresh, but the whole book is so comprehensive and at the same time so readable that if the student had to choose one book on the subject we should recommend this for his choice. By a different line of argument he arrives at very much the same conclusions as his predecessors. One of his most successful achievements is the marshalling of evidence to show the impressive unanimity with regard to the nature of the Church that is to be found in such diverse writers as Paul, the authors of 1 Peter, Hebrews, the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel. The principal results in Dr. Flew's survey of the Church in the New Testament are as follows: (*a*) The Ecclesia originated in the will of God, who inaugurated by His Spirit a new era as a result of all that the work of Christ revealed about God.

(*b*) Human experience was testifying that in the fellowship of the Spirit the message of the Cross was being worked out in a new way of life. (*c*) The principle of authority in the Church rested on the Word, the Divine revelation in Christ. Apostolic authority was that of eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, who could testify above all to the fact of the Resurrection. The Church came into being through the preaching of the Word, and it was built up by the several ministries which were alike the gift of the Spirit.

The latest of these studies is Dr. George Johnston's book, published in 1943, *The Doctrine of the Church in the New Testament.* This very scholarly book had the advantage of following those already named, and the many other studies, especially those by German scholars, to which Dr. K. L. Schmidt and Dr. R. N. Flew both make frequent reference. On many points he criticises the positions taken up by these two scholars, such as the authenticity of the two Matthæan logia, and the Pauline authorship of Ephesians. One interesting question to which he devotes some attention is the date when the Church may be said to have come into being. Dr. Flew favours the call of the first disciples, G. Gloege (*Reich Gottes und Kirche im N.T.*) the confession at Cæsarea Philippi (but 'I will build my Church' seems to point to the future), K. L. Schmidt the Last Supper. Over against these Dr. Johnston insists that 'ἐκκλησία, that is "Church," should be reserved for the society which gathered itself into a vital fellowship as a result of the Resurrection, inspired and called by God. . . . Christianity is an Easter religion.' Yet he seems to approve of Johannes Weiss's description of Peter's confession as 'proleptic' and of the disciples as potentially the Church, and he adds, 'they became the Church through the baptism of the Spirit. Without the Cross and the Resurrection there is no Church.'

There are, of course, many aspects of the New Testament teaching about the Church which have not even been touched upon in this brief introduction to a great subject, such as the place of the Sacraments in the teaching and life of the Church. The method that has been adopted is not to try to pack into a short article an outline of the teaching, explicit or implicit, of all the books of the New Testament. This would within present limits be nothing but a series of headings and subheadings. At greater length than is possible here such a summary may be found in the various Dictionaries edited by Dr. Hastings, and the student may be referred to them. It has seemed of greater service to the general reader to recall him to the great pioneer work by Dr. Hort, and then to recommend him to work through recent books which deal with those questions about the Biblical doctrine of the Church that are most keenly debated at the present time. These books have been chosen because they are accessible in English. But they also direct the more advanced student to the many books and brochures, such as those by G. Gloege, H. D. Wendland, O. Linton, and H. E. Weber, to which I would also add W. G. Kümmel's *Kirchenbegriff und Geschichtsbewusstsein in der Urgemeinde und bei Jesus* [1943]. A study of the whole subject, as seen from many different angles, teaches one far more than can be learned from short summaries.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

The Television Mast

By the Reverend R. Percival Jones, Birmingham

'He who is faithful with a trifle is also faithful with a large trust.'—Lk 16^{10} (Moffatt).

From the end of the road in which I live can be seen the tallest wireless mast so far erected by the British Broadcasting Corporation. It is the television mast at Sutton Coldfield. This mast, which supports both the television and sound aerials, stands seven hundred and fifty feet high. Up to a height of six hundred feet it is triangular, each side being twelve feet across. For the next one hundred and ten feet the mast is circular, and above this again is a cantilever tower forty feet high which supports the television aerial itself. Inside the mast is a lift, and communication between the lift and the ground is by means of radio.

I was charmed by the innocence of the lady who telephoned the B.B.C. in Birmingham to say that, as it was a fine afternoon, she thought she would take a trip to see the television mast at Sutton Coldfield, and could they please tell her on which side of the road she would find it. She did not realize that it was such an unmistakable landmark. In the day time its slender structure can be seen for miles around, and at night its tall line of red lights stands out conspicuously against the dark sky. What a wonderful sight it is!

But here is something which, I think, may surprise you. This amazing mast, seven

hundred and fifty feet high, does not stand on the ground, but is balanced on a very small ball little bigger than a hen's egg. Although the top of the mast sways as much as fourteen feet, it is held in position quite securely by means of long and powerful cables. I often drive past it in my car, but never without thinking of that little ball-bearing at its base, and without marvelling that so much can rest on so little.

Now, the same is true of us. I mean that in our lives too, very much may rest upon so little. Going to Church on a Sunday; saying our prayers in the morning; reading some verses of the Bible in the evening—these seem very little things, but they are just the things that help to make our characters tall and erect and secure. Going round with a smile; speaking a cheerful word to someone who is discouraged; giving Mother a little help in the home—these seem very trivial, but these are the things by which we broadcast the message of Jesus to the world.

Of course, it is also true that little habits, if they are evil, can interfere with our service for Jesus. When the television transmitter at Sutton Coldfield was being tested, there was a sudden breakdown. The engineers searched frantically for the fault. What do you think it was? A technical hitch? Not exactly! A little tiny field-mouse had found its way into the delicate wiring and had caused a short-circuit which put television off the air completely.

So in our lives some little wrong habit, like the neglect of our prayers, the omission of some duty, or even a wrong thought, can creep in to interfere with our service for Jesus.

That is why Jesus told us to be watchful. 'Watch and pray,' is what He said. Watch for the little evils that will cause a breakdown in our characters, and pray for the good things that will make us 'living images' of Jesus in the world. Jesus also said, 'He who is faithful with a trifle is also faithful with a large trust.'

Lions and Devils

By the Reverend Roy McVicar, M.A., Glasgow

'Your enemy the devil prowls like a roaring lion, looking out for someone to devour.'—1 P 5^8 (Moffatt).

If I were to ask you what you think the devil is like I wonder what you would say? Of course, people used to describe him as having horns and a tail, but we don't think of him like that now. However, here is the Bible telling us that he is like a lion; and having spent some time in Central Africa where there are a lot of lions, I thought that perhaps if we think about them and their habits, we shall also be learning about the devil.

The first thing you learn about a lion is its immense strength. The lion is not called the 'King of Beasts' for nothing. He is so powerful that he can kill a full-grown bullock, breaking its neck with one blow of his paw.

Just before I came home, in the great game park in South Africa there was a really titanic struggle. A full-grown male lion and a full-grown male buffalo met in combat. There has always been some dispute as to which of these animals was the stronger; well, these two fought for thirty-one hours non-stop, and in the end the lion killed the buffalo.

This incident will perhaps give you some idea of the almost terrifying strength of the lion. A man unarmed has no chance against a lion. And the same is true of the devil. Evil is far stronger than we can tackle in our own strength.

The second thing you learn about lions is that they are not usually dangerous when you meet them in the open. One day in a town in Central Africa five lions came walking down the main street, turned at the Police Office, and walked back again, out into the bush. Every one ran to safety, but they did not need to. If the lions had been hungry they would not have been walking out in the open; they would have been prowling, unseen, outside the town, ready to pounce on the first animal or person that came near.

When I first went to Africa I was given this advice: If you are walking along a path after dark, and you hear a rustling noise in the bush nearby, you need not worry, for any of the dangerous animals like lions or leopards move so quietly that you will not hear any sound.

Lions then are not so dangerous out in the open as when they are prowling unseen and unheard. And the same is true of evil; the worst sins are not open ones which we all recognize easily, but the sins which live often unknown in our hearts. Not many people are tempted to do great sins like murder; but almost every one falls a prey to jealousy, bad temper, hatred, greed, and many other evils which we can have, unrecognized as evil. These are the most dangerous just because they are not out in the open.

Now our text tells us that the devil is our enemy, some one to be fought and conquered. We must not play with evil. The devil is just the name given to the spirit of evil who is everywhere, and who is responsible for making us do bad things: he makes us tell lies, he makes us selfish and cruel and mean. If we are to be successful in beating him, then we must not forget the two things we have learned: one, to be on our guard against sins which are hidden and secret, and two, that he is too strong for us by ourselves. In our own strength we cannot hope to beat the enemy.

That is why Jesus came into the world, to help us in our fight. He helps us to know sin and to hate it; and He gives us His great strength so that we shall be able to win the fight.

Strong in the Lord of hosts,
And in His mighty power;
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror.

The Christian Year

ROGATION SUNDAY

The Snake in the Grass

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR A. COWAN, D.D., EDINBURGH

'I will set a feud between you and the woman, between your brood and hers: they shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their heel.'—Gn 3^{15} (Moffatt).

The Garden of Eden idyll is an allegory on the stealthy approach of evil and its grim aftermath.

It was when Virgil suspected a nasty surprise, that he exclaimed, 'A snake lurks in the grass!' The allegory of Eden exposes the hidden threat to faith and character, and proceeds to declare war on the snake in the grass, which had got round poor Eve and taken such an unpardonable advantage of human nature that human nature will hit back. The deceiver of human hearts is fated to be detected and hated the day after the deception. Gentle Izaak Walton wrote, 'I love such mirth as does not make friends ashamed to look upon one another next morning.' But the mirth induced by the wicked serpent awakens to a sunrise of disgust and recoil, and people resent being swindled and humiliated like this. In Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Raskolnikoff, a struggling student in Petrograd, murdered two old women, killed them with a hatchet, because one of them was a grasping money-lender, and he was deluded enough to suppose himself a benefactor who had cleansed society of a vile wretch, but after the deed he felt that his devoted mother and sister belonged to a world which he could never again love and enjoy, so that their company became an unbearable reproach to him. The inward rebuke after a downfall makes a bad temper, a combative mood, which will explode.

Hence the revolt against the viper of evil, which had led Eve up the garden path and wheedled her into tasting some 'fruity' stuff as the only satisfying sweets of life. Such tempting pretence is now unmasked and branded as a fatal decoy. So a curse is laid upon its deadly lures and it is sentenced by the Divine Judge to a future in which it will be constantly assailed by angry humans who have been badly stung. There will be a standing quarrel between the deceptive serpent and the successors of Eve who will bear the serpent a lasting grudge for playing so false. The fight is on. 'I will set a feud between you and the woman, between your brood and hers,' says the Divine Judge to the serpent: 'they shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their heel.'

What does the Allegory of Temptation and the Fall tell us? It tells that early man had reached the stage of having a conscience and being aware of moral distinctions, but the first thing he did was to question and blur these moral distinctions. Human creatures had been constituted to find their completion in God, but notice how they were diverted from their spiritual rendezvous by the snake in the grass. The fabled serpent suggested to Eve that she had a grievance against God, who was cheating her out of a desirable experience, and why? Because God wished to keep her down, and if she was a woman of spirit she would not put up with it. There was nothing to be frightened about in taking a different line from God, and she would get a kick out of life and make delicious discoveries by letting herself rip. Why let the unseen Will make her dull? Dorothy Sayers warns us here: 'The great thing, I am sure, is not to be nervous about God, not to try to shut out the Lord Immanuel from any sphere,' afraid that He might break the spell of freedom and enchantment. But alas! Eve was hoodwinked by the serpent, and afterwards she blamed the wicked dissembler.

Thus it all comes back to the snake in the grass as the villain of the piece. Ruskin thus describes the serpent: 'That running brook of horror. . . . Startle it;—the winding stream will become a twisted arrow;—the wave of poisoned life will lash through the grass like a cast lance . . . it can outclimb the monkey, outswim the fish.' Such is the reptile that symbolizes the deadly surprise, the evil which fascinates and then kills. It glides into human minds to discount sacred values as inhibitions to be scrapped, to argue that God is an unreasonable veto on natural instincts, to excite curiosity and promise us the wisdom of the gods, and then to drag its victims down to ruin and shame. Are they not so heartsick and shocked that their better feelings are roused to fight back, and put some punch into it too? Men are often proof against temptations to drink because they have poignant memories of a drunken father who broke their mother's heart. That is the feud with the degrading serpent.

According to our allegory, work was part of the primal blessing on Adam and Eve when they were set in the Garden 'to dress it and to keep it.' But, thanks to the snake in the grass, the conditions of labour have been so embittered that many jobs

are done in sorrow and sweat, and the necessity to work is regarded not as a blessing but as a curse. Trade and industry have been so exploited by the beastly tricks of evil that many have been defrauded of their due, and the wrongs inflicted by the serpent have been avenged by future generations. That is the enduring conflict between the viper's impostures and the injured sons of men. No wonder the Divine voice said the insufferable snake would be fought to a finish. 'I will set a feud between you and the woman, between your brood and hers: they shall strike at your head, and you shall strike at their heel.'

That means that evil is a base lie, which is prostrate and must be kept down. 'Upon thy belly shalt thou go.' The creeping impulses of evil will be seen to have an inferior position and to be beneath man's dignity and vocation. It is thus God's purpose to put men and women over evil and give them the upper hand.

Again, there will be perpetual enmity towards this accursed crawler, and people will strike at its head. When you wish to kill an adder in the heather, you hit it on the head with a stick or a stone. So it is predicted that people will defend themselves against the creeping menace by hitting it on the head, striking at the thoughts, the arguments, the ideologies of evil, despatching the sinful mentality. There will be constant strife. The fallacy, the lust, and the abuse which we assumed to be dead often come to life again unnoticed, and wound us when our back is turned. A man thus strikes at the snake's head, but the snake strikes him on the heel, sometimes cripples him for a bit, stops his progress for years.

But look! The overcast sky has brightened with promise of greater ascendency over the evil reptile. The dragon, which St. George challenged, was a crawling monster, a serpent, but St. George was not outwitted and beaten like Eve. No—he slew it. May not that symbolize the difference Christ has made in the encounter with evil? Says the Bishop of Stockholm, 'The future belongs to Christ.' Christ has vanquished the uncanny wiles of evil, and He shares His victory with all who are committed to Him and attached to Him. The Venetian master, Tintoretto, was called a thunderbolt of a man, because when you stood in front of his pictures you felt that you also partook of the health, verve, and strength of the heroes he painted. There was a God-like plenty about Tintoretto. There is also a God-like plenty in Christ, and we should exult in His overflowing greatness and have our nature reinforced. If the future belongs to Christ, it is a guarantee to every Christ-devoted heart of triumph over the creeping dragon, the deadly lie of evil.

But in our efforts to foil the snake in the grass we are often strained and worn out, and wonder if we shall be a match for the reptile when it appears somewhere else. Well, if we are in touch with Christ, we are revived and rallied by Him every day. Schubert often felt spent at night, as if he had no more tunes in his head, but he was confident that new melodies would occur to him next morning. 'Now I know nothing more,' he would say after an exhausting day, 'but to-morrow I am sure to know something fresh'; and Schubert was not mistaken, for he was the king of song-writers, and composed some six hundred songs. We should have a similar confidence. We are sure to know something fresh of Christ's conquering sufficiency from day to day. His mercies are new every morning: great is His faithfulness' to those who have faith in Him.

Our religion must be personal, but it also must have a world outlook. Can we hope for a more Christian course of history? By Christ's victory God has doomed the crawling perversion of truth and right, and revealed His will that man shall have the mastery over evil. It is God's intention to give us the advantage over the creeping lie which spreads venom in the spirit and policy of nations. The Kingdom of God has come, it is here now, and though it is consummated only hereafter, beyond history, it will advance on the earth and make progress in world affairs. God's saving purpose is marching on to render the serpent's persuasion more and more repulsive to human hearts and to make the sins of the time praise Him. We can see this happening, and we rejoice that God is an over-ruling power who has already maimed the revolting viper of evil and destined it to be so found out and so detested that men will not stand it. The age-long feud against the snake in the grass will succeed, because the future belongs to Christ who opens blind eyes.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION

Prayer

BY THE REVEREND WILLIAM BARCLAY, B.D., GLASGOW

'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' —Lk 11^{13}.

It was in one of His incomparable stories that Jesus gave to us some of His vivid and most suggestive teaching about prayer. Late one night there came to a man an unexpected visitor. The duty of hospitality was sacred in Palestine. It was not enough to set before a guest, however unexpected, a bare sufficiency; it was necessary to set before him many times too much. But the

householder had no food in the house. Down the village street there lived a friend of his and, midnight though it was, he determined to go to him to try to borrow some bread. When he arrived at his house he found the door shut. That in Palestine was a sure sign that the occupant of the house did not want to be disturbed. In the morning the door was opened and any one might come out and go in, for life was public in a Palestinian village; but no one would knock at a closed door, the sign of privacy desired, without a very compelling reason. But this man was not to be stopped; he began to knock. Now the ordinary Palestinian house of the poorer folk had but one room. Two-thirds of it was on the ground level. There was no flooring; it was simply beaten earth with dried reeds and rushes on the top. Into this part, which extended for about two-thirds of the house, the livestock were often brought at night for safety's sake. At the top end of the single room there was a raised part, like a low platform. Upon it there burned the charcoal stove and round this stove the whole family slept at night, close huddled together for warmth. This arrangement had the advantage of warmth; but it had the disadvantage that no one could rise without awaking the rest of the family. It was to a household like that the knocking on the door came. It was pitch black. To get up was to disturb every one; it would be necessary to grope one's way to the door among the livestock; and very naturally the householder did not want to get up. But the knocking went on until at last the householder in despair arose, went to the door, and gave to the seeker all the bread he needed. It was importunity—the Greek calls it 'shamelessness'—in asking that procured for the seeker the help he required.

That story, said Jesus, teaches us something about prayer. But what? Are we to take it that if we batter at God's door long enough, if we pester God shamelessly enough, if we besiege God with salvo after salvo of prayer, we will finally break down His resistance and compel Him to give us what we ask? Far from that. A parable can be used in two ways. It can be used for the sake of likeness and it can be used for the sake of contrast. This parable is used for contrast. Read on to the passage which comes after the parable. 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: *how much more* shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' What this parable says is, 'If a churlish and unwilling householder can finally be pestered into giving his friend what he needs, *how much more* will God give to His children those things which are good for them?' The parable does not liken God to an unwilling friend; it *contrasts* His desire to give with the friend's reluctance.

But does that mean that we have only to ask and God will give? There are certain rules in prayer and unless these rules are observed the efficacy of prayer is sadly impaired.

1. *We must be honest in prayer.* Luther said that the first rule of prayer is, 'Don't lie to God.' In the days of manhood Augustine was to become the greatest of Christians after Paul. But in his youth he did not lead a good life. He had the unfortunate, but not uncommon, experience that when he was being bad he wanted to be good, and when he was being good he wanted to be bad. He tells us how he used to kneel and pray, 'O God, make me pure, make me pure.' And then he would add in a whisper, '*But not yet; but not yet.*' He did not want his prayer to be answered. Is it possible that sometimes we pray for things which we know are the right things, but we do not really want them, and would get a shattering shock if we got them? First and foremost we must be honest in prayer. If we find in our heart of hearts that the heart does not really desire the things the lips pray for then first we must ask God to lend us His Holy Spirit to waken the desire for the right things within us.

2. We must always remember that *prayer is never to be regarded as the easy way out.* God will not do for us what we can very well do for ourselves. As the proverb has it, 'God gives the birds their food but He does not put it into their mouths.' The worst way to help a child is to do things for him; that kind of help merely makes it certain that he will never be able to do things for himself. It is useless to pray for health and then to break all the laws of health. It is useless to pray for peace and then to proceed to all the kinds of conduct which make a war in the heart. It is useless to pray for the sick, the sad, the poor, unless we are prepared to visit the sick, to comfort the sad, and to help the poor. But when we have done our utmost, *then* we can pray and God will come in and that utmost will become an infinite thing. As has been said with truth, 'Jesus Christ did not come to make life easy but to make men great.' Prayer is not the cushion on which we lean back, but the source of power which, when we attempt great things, makes them, in God's grace, to come true.

3. We must always remember that *God is far wiser than we are.* We are in the position of a person coming into a film show. He has not seen the beginning of the film, nor will he see the end, and the bit he does see hardly makes sense at all. We are like the child often wanting things, which,

if he got them, would only be to his grave and serious hurt. God alone sees all time; God is like the human father who knows what is best for his child. It is therefore quite wrong to speak of unanswered prayer until we have left life behind; and then we shall see that many of the prayers we thought unanswered were answered not in our way but in God's way. It is told of one of the most famous of Scottish scholars that when he was a lad at school a certain clerking job was vacant. He tried to get it; he prayed to get it; he failed to get it. Because of his failure he went back to school to study; he went on to the university; he ended by becoming a professor whom all the world knew, admired and loved. Was his prayer answered or unanswered? God answered it *but in God's way*.

4. We must remember that *prayer often does not release us from a situation but enables us to face it*. Look again at Gethsemane. There Jesus prayed with all the intensity of His being that the cup might pass from Him. It did not, but He was given strength to drain it to its bitter dregs. There was a lady who was a saint if ever there was a saint. She was dying of cancer of the spine with all the dreadful pain of that terrible disease. She prayed, her husband prayed, her son prayed for her cure. But she was not cured. Was then all that prayer useless? Far from it. She was given strength to endure with a calm serenity that was in itself a miracle. In the days to come her husband was given grace to face life in a loneliness he never thought he could endure. Her son was enabled to go out and to face life again with that something precious which only sorrow can put in a man's heart. Over and over again, prayer does not save us from the breaking-point, but it enables us to pass the breaking-point and not to break.

5. We must remember that *in the highest prayer there are no words at all*. It is only when we do not know a person well that we have to struggle to make conversation. When we know a person intimately we can be supremely happy in each other's company with no words at all. Of course, in prayer we should speak to God, but far too often we have been brought up to think of prayer as saying to God, 'Give me this; give me that; give me the next thing.' We must give God the thanks of our hearts; confess to Him the mistakes of our lives; tell Him of the things we need; commit to His care and keeping those we love. But when we have done that, in the dawn of the day or as the last shadows lengthen to night, we should, as it were, in the silence of intimacy lean back in the arms of God, feeling around us His love and His power, and saying silently, 'Thy will be done.' If we do that then we shall know what Moses meant when he said, 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.' Then prayer will have brought its greatest gift—the gift of a life lived in the presence and in the power of God.

WHITSUNDAY

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

BY THE REVEREND PROFESSOR JOHN FOSTER, D.D., THE UNIVERSITY, GLASGOW

'To you is the promise.'—Ac 2^{39} (R.V.).

What had happened? There was something. That crowd in the street knew. They didn't know *what*. Do we? Do we know what happened on the Day of Pentecost? Perhaps we had better stand in with the crowd that is asking. St. Luke, having written his Gospel, was gathering material for the Acts, his second volume. While in Jerusalem with St. Paul, he asked all sorts of people. Some said they heard a sound—'the rushing of a mighty wind.' Some said they saw a flame pass from one to another—'tongues parting asunder, like as of fire.' Some said their excited shouting was understood by the mixed crowd outside—'every man in his own language.' Some said the crowd outside heard the excitement but didn't understand a word; 'Drunk!' they said, 'filled with new wine!' If it was a confused account when only a few years afterwards St. Luke was there in Jerusalem, how can *we* hope to answer the question, 'What had happened?'

All these things that *are* confused—the rushing wind, the tongues of fire, the other tongues—are not the heart of the matter. What we want to know is not what form the excitement took, but behind all the excitement, *what had come to them*? So let us join the crowd that is asking.

A flight of stone steps outside the house leads up from the street level to the guest-room. That Upper Room had already become a place of many memories. *Could* it be only just over seven weeks ago that Jesus had told two of them that they were to make ready the Passover here. That Passover Supper He had never eaten. Instead, the night before, the Thursday night, He had held a supper of His own, the Last Supper. The last! His enemies arrested Him that night, rushed Him off to trial. In the morning they hung Him on a gibbet by the side of the highway. By three in the afternoon He was dead. And the disciples crept back to this Upper Room, and closed the shutters, and bolted the door, for fear. Friday, Saturday, Sunday—and on Sunday though the door was shut, He came to them. They saw Him

alive, and He gave them His peace. They kept seeing Him. For forty days afterwards they lived on the tiptoe of expectation. They never knew when they might find Him there—in the room, on the road, by the lake. Then He told them that it would not happen like this again, but something else would. They were to wait for it in Jerusalem. *Now it had come.* What was it ?

We can only begin to understand if we see it in line with the whole series of experiences which it crowned. When first He called them He talked of His Kingdom and bade them share its strange adventure. He strode through the land with life in His touch, in His word, in His look. And to them He said, 'Follow Me. . . . Learn of Me. . . . Love one another as I have loved you. . . . The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works than these shall ye do.' Impossible ? It would have seemed so, but *He was there.* He had called the Twelve of them to found the New Israel, twelve new tribes, as it were, of the *True* Israel, the Church. It was a new day of the mighty acts of God with themselves in the place of the Patriarchs. And then suddenly it *was* impossible —because He was taken away.

When they saw Him again, life came back to their souls. They were so glad that they did not stop to think what it meant with regard to the Kingdom. Now He told them, and it was something even vaster than that to which He had called them before. The New Israel was to be gathered from every nation under heaven : 'Ye are witnesses of these things. Repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in My name unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. And behold, I send forth the promise of My Father, upon you ; but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.' Before, they had faced impossibilities because He was there. Now they no longer saw Him, but there had come, unseen, but just as truly personal, Another Presence. Another, yet not another. In so many ways the same, the great difference was that before they saw Him with them. *Now they felt This in them.* Impossible ? Was anything impossible to those who had received the promise? In token of it, they began their task of witnessing, 'and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.'

What do we need for a revival of religion in our time ? A more aggressive evangelism, full use of modern techniques, more life in our services, more zeal in our service, a better equipped ministry, more responsible laymen. True, all true. But one thing above all. In the past, whenever the Word has been preached with power, power to save souls, power to shake the world, it is because there has come upon men a sense of the *more immediate presence of God.* But, of course, you cannot be a Christian without believing in God. Worship would be a mockery without believing that God hears and cares. That is one thing. But it is quite another thing *so* to believe in God that when I preach I do offer life to dying men ; *so* to believe in God that when you pray, all the resources of Omnipotent Love are there. That urgency, that immediacy, are the secret not only of Pentecost, but of every succeeding period of renewal in the life of the Church. 'To you is the promise.'

Well, was the promise really fulfilled ? We are able to look, not just at this Book of the Acts, about the beginnings of the Church, but at 'the acts' in all the nineteen centuries since. Do the records show that there *is* such an empowering Presence ? Let us take one item in the promise, 'The works that I do shall ye do also ; and greater works than these shall ye do.' Greater works than His ! I have always felt it surprising that Christians of the first century, with their immense veneration of our Lord, should have allowed such words to remain among their records. Can it be for any other reason than that Jesus *did* say them ? This *was* the promise. How did it work out ?

Let us move on one hundred years. About A.D. 150 this is what a Christian in Rome has to say about bearing witness to Jesus Christ : 'Our Lord urged us by patience and humility to convert all from shame and the lust of evil. And this I can show to have taken place in the case of many who have come in contact with us, who were overcome, and changed from violent and tyrannical characters, either from having watched the constancy of their Christian neighbours' lives, or from having observed the wonderful patience of fellow-travellers under unjust exactions, or from the trial they made of those with whom they were concerned in business.' Greater works ? Yes, greater in extent. The ministry of Jesus was all in the narrow little land of Palestine. Now the witness was being carried in Christian lives all over the trade routes of the Roman Empire, and beyond—as he says, transforming, wherever it went.

Move on another hundred years. About A.D. 250, on the eve of the most terrible persecutions which for two generations will try (but fail) to exterminate the Christian Faith, this is what a Christian of Alexandria has to say. He starts with that very promise of Jesus—'Jesus promised that His disciples should do even greater works than those which He showed. This has been fulfilled. For always there are being opened the eyes of those who were blind in soul. The ears of those who were deaf to words of virtue hear eagerly of God and of the blessed life with Him. Many, too, who were lame in the feet of the inner man (as the

Bible calls it) do not only leap, but receive from Jesus power to trample upon sin and upon all the power of the enemy.' This is a triumphant story, moving through all the centuries. No, no, it is not all triumph. Not always, nor in all its parts is the Church on earth pulsing with vitality. But somewhere, always somewhere, there is that Presence which means life and power. That is how the Christian Faith has itself continued, has come down to us.

Let us take a leap and come down nearer our own time—a hundred and seventy years ago. This is what John Wesley wrote about witness to Christ's salvation then. 'In what age has such a number of sinners been recovered in so short a time? I believe hardly can either ancient or modern history afford a parallel instance.' Greater works? John Wesley is quite right. His work *is* one of the greatest. Sober, secular historians have agreed that he and his preaching transformed the life of these islands. More than that, he did much to generate forces which were soon to move on to something greater yet.

For right at the end of that eighteenth century began the modern missionary movement. That movement has, in this last hundred and fifty years, carried the gospel far wider than it has ever been before, until to-day it is literally true to say there are Christians in every country of the world. If you are looking through the centuries for mighty acts of God, here is the mightiest of them all. 'Repentance and remission of sins shall be preached in My name unto all the nations. . . . Behold, I send forth the promise of My Father upon you.' Much remains to be done, but of all the sixty generations since the days of the Apostles we have come nearest to fulfilment of our Lord's command. On our side the fulfilment is partial—but on His side, ah, the promise has been fulfilled. 'To you is the promise.'

That is what I want us to get hold of. The event we are celebrating to-day belongs not only to the year—what was it? A.D. 29. It continues true of every generation since. The presence and power of the Spirit of God are demonstrably true in the far-flung work of Christ's Church in this our time. 'Our time'—no, *that* is not enough. '*To you* is the promise' The giving of the Spirit is not just to the Apostles—those figures in the stained-glass windows with haloes round their heads. There is a Power waiting to come into your life. You may know God-with-you. And that transforms life, makes those who have stumbled and sinned, able to begin to live triumphantly.

What is the way of it? That is what the crowd asked Peter and the rest of the Apostles, 'Brethren, what shall we do?' The answer is still the same, Repentance and remission of sins in His name, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for to you is the promise.'

Let us pray:

Lord come to us that thou mayest cleanse us;
Lord come to us that thou mayest heal us;
Lord come to us that thou mayest strengthen us
and give us to triumph over our sins
and to fulfil thy glorious purposes,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TRINITY SUNDAY

The Doctrine of the Trinity[1]

BY THE REVEREND PROFESSOR NORMAN H. SNAITH, D.D., WESLEY COLLEGE, LEEDS

'. . . into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.'—Mt 28^{19} (R.V.).

We declare that there is One God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. The Father is one Person, the Son is another Person, the Holy Spirit is yet another Person. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God; yet there are not three gods, but One God. Each is equally and fully God. It is wrong to say that they are parts of God, and that all taken together make the One God. No. One God. The Three Persons are distinct; that is, the Father is not the Son, and the Spirit is not the Son. Each Person Himself is God.

This doctrine is much spoken against on the ground that it is wholly intellectual and theoretical, whereas sensible, practical men have neither the time nor the patience for such things. The contrary is the case. This particular doctrine, more than any other, depends upon actual human experience. To talk about it as being wholly theoretical is sheer ignorance. If there had been no theorizing and thinking things out, we would never have talked about the One; if it had been all theorizing, we would never have talked about the Three. So let us go back nineteen hundred years, and talk about what happened then, about the actual experience of those men and women.

The first Christians were Jews, firm believers in the One God. There is plenty of evidence as to the trouble and persecution into which the Jew walked open-eyed, because he insisted on his strict, unrelenting monotheistic faith. The second wave of Christians were mostly Gentiles, but Gentiles who had been attracted in the first instance to the Jewish faith. This last was for two reasons: one, the excellent moral standards of the Jew in contrast to the laxity of the pagan world; two, the Jewish belief in the One God in contrast to the multiplicity of gods and godlets of the pagan world.

[1] This sermon will appear in 'New Men in Christ Jesus' to be published shortly by the Epworth Press.

This all means that none of the first Christians were in any doubt about the One Creator-God. But there was this Man, Christ Jesus. There is a certain amount of evidence in the Gospels that He Himself claimed to be Divine, but it is abundantly plain that in the first years after the Resurrection and Pentecost, the men and women who had known Him in Galilee and Jerusalem grew more and more sure that this Jesus was God, truly God, God living a truly human life. More than this. He was not a part of God, a phase of God, an activity of God, or anything like that, but God. 'In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' But how could this Jesus, Peasant of Galilee, have made heaven and earth? The net result of this is: Jesus is God and the Creator is God—different, yet One.

But this is not the end of the complications. There is an incident recorded in the second chapter of Acts: the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is a strange story of frightened, uncertain men, who suddenly became bolder than lions, and very sure indeed of what they said and did. The more they thought about that Pentecost experience, they and succeeding generations, the more they became convinced that here also was a genuine experience of the Presence of God. Once again, it was not a part of God, nor a phase of God, nor an activity of God, but God, really and truly God, this time entering into men's hearts and lives, changing them, making them different, transforming them, binding them into a new fellowship. But He was different from Jesus of Nazareth, and different again from the Creator-God—different, twice different, but nevertheless, One Only God.

Thus they found themselves bound to say Creator-God, Jesus-God, Holy-Spirit-God. Their experience made them unshakeably sure of the Three, and succeeding generations have been equally sure. To emphasize the matter again: it was the *experience* of these three Christians which made them sure about the Three. But then, when they and we think things out, we know very well that, if there is such a Being as God, then He must be One and Only One. This is the dilemma. We have to say Three and we have also to say One; whoever denies either is speaking less than the truth. The problem of those who formulated the Creed centuries back was how to include both statements, and they did it by using the word which we translate as 'person.' We therefore say, 'Three Persons in One God.' The word 'persons' is not really satisfactory, but we have to use *some* word, and this is the least *un*satisfactory. But it is not as unsatisfactory as many people make it out to be. Most people use the word 'person' to mean 'individual,' thinking of a man as all isolated and wholly independent of everybody else. There is no such thing as an individual in this isolated sense. The 'individual' is an abstraction, born of unscientific analysis and a bastard psychology in which theory has never been truly married to experience. Husband and wife are two persons, but they are not two 'individuals.' They are mutually independent, they belong to each other, and neither is complete without the other. We need to try and think of three persons even more at one than husband and wife can ever be, and then still more at one several times over, so much at one that we can say each is the whole. That is the kind of thing we are trying to say about God, and even then we are just stumbling along with human ideas and human words.

For us, April–May 1951, it means this: He is always Creator; better still, always creating. Thank heaven we are at last cutting loose from the idea of a static God, that deadly heritage of the Greeks, back to the Bible idea of an active God. This last means more to-day than ever it did, with our modern ideas of a changing world, an expanding universe, and so forth. He is always bringing new worlds into being, creating new organisms, running the world, and running it so consistently that we can make rules about it all, rules that are good enough to live by.

He is always Saviour, God bridging the gap between God and man, a thing the philosophers have never been able to do. Nineteen hundred years ago He died on a Cross, bearing the results of man's sin, both the plain wickedness and the enlightened self-interest of the respectable folks. What is true of God the Son then is true now. That is the measure of His love for me now. He deals with the sin of the past and all its guilt, their sin and my sin; their guilt and my guilt. I can start again where I am right now.

But how *can* I be different? He is always God the Holy Spirit, who can enter into a man, make him different, make a new man of him, a new man in Christ Jesus, and all this just as surely for you and me now as for them in that Upper Room long ago. This new life is God's great gift to mortal man, a gift he can know here and now, and increasingly as the years pass by. It is the one way in which we can be free from this self-interest which brings tears and death in its train. The offer is to you and me, and it is NOW.

Dr. Niebuhr's Political and Religious Thought[1]

By the Reverend N. H. G. Robinson, D.Litt., Rothesay

For twenty-one years Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr has occupied with distinction a Chair in Union Theological Seminary, New York. During that time he has made many substantial and weighty contributions both to political and to religious thought, and it is already eleven years since he delivered in Edinburgh his Gifford Lectures under the title, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*. It is not to be supposed of course that during this fruitful period of intellectual work Niebuhr has succeeded in maintaining or has even tried [2] to maintain a single self-consistent standpoint. On the contrary, there have been developments and changes, although the self-identity of the thinker is generally apparent from a good deal more than the name which appears on the different title-pages. But the changes are interesting and the detection of their direction a matter of some importance.

In 1939, just prior to the delivery of Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures, Principal John Baillie was able to describe him as a critic of liberalism but as a critic of a very individual and discriminating kind. 'Theologically,' he said, 'Niebuhr is indebted to Karl Barth, politically and socially to Karl Marx.' But although that was an apt and fair estimate at the time it scarcely represents the impression which Niebuhr leaves to-day upon the contemporary mind. Much has happened since the year of grace 1939, and like many other things Niebuhr's thought has undergone considerable change. Certainly there has been no obvious *volte face* but there have been changes of emphasis; and it is the purpose of this article to suggest, and to offer some considerations in defence of, four propositions, namely (i) that in social and political philosophy Niebuhr has moved farther away from Marx; (ii) that in theology he has moved farther away from Barth; (iii) that his theology and his social and political philosophy have become more closely integrated the one to the other; and (iv) that in the result his theology has perhaps acquired a clearer position of precedence over his political philosophy than was the case at an earlier stage.

In the first place, then, some consideration is due to Niebuhr's political philosophy. In 1932 he published a book entitled *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, and in it he defended the thesis, against all forms of liberalism, religious and secular, that of necessity society is much more immoral than the individual, that the action of any society contains much more 'unrestrained egoism' than need be seen in individual action, and further that 'this distinction justifies and necessitates political policies which a purely individualistic ethic must always find embarrassing.' [3] In other words, since any social and political action inevitably involves in very large measure the exercise of egoistic power the inhibitions we may have in regard to such exercise, inhibitions which perhaps normally we regard as moral, are not moral at all; and policies which from the standpoint of an individualistic ethic we tend to regard as indefensible may in fact be completely justifiable and indeed necessary. Even the policy of revolution and violence may be in that case, and Niebuhr devotes a chapter to the examination of its potentialities. His treatment yields no more than tentative conclusions but on the whole he tends to favour evolution rather than revolution, although he declares that 'if violence can be justified at all, its terror must have the tempo of a surgeon's skill and healing must follow quickly upon its wounds.' [4]

If, however, Niebuhr is somewhat inconclusive on the question of method, how does he stand in respect of the end which the method is designed to achieve? In the answer to this question there are two parts, for, although on the one hand Niebuhr disavows the ultimate end of anarchism, that is, peace and justice without law and force, and declares [5] that in actual history the perpetual dream of peace and brotherhood is incapable of realization, on the other hand he accepts, with certain qualifications, as a proximate and practical goal, the Marxist proletarian's social vision of an

[1] This article was submitted to Dr. Niebuhr. He expressed disagreement on one point only. 'I think I would have only one question, and that is that Dr. Robinson pictures me as moving farther and farther away from Barth. My own impression is that I, as almost everybody else, gained a certain impetus from Barth, but I never accepted what seems to me his radical denial of the meaning of history, and I think I made almost as many criticisms of him in my Gifford Lectures as I have made subsequently.'—Editor.

[2] Cf. his own complaint that another writer had allowed history to add so little to his insights of twenty years before! *Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, 184.

[3] *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, p. xi.

[4] *Ib.*, 220.

[5] Cf. *ib.*, 22.

equalitarian society. ' " From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," is,' he says,[1] ' indeed an ideal which is . . . impossible of consistent application in the complexities of society . . . but it is an ideal toward which a rational society must move.'

Now there is one very curious feature of Niebuhr's thought at this earlier stage, for one might well have expected him to see that if egoistic power is necessary to overcome injustice it is equally bound to create injustice in other forms. Indeed it is odd that believing society to be so much less moral than the individual he should yet seek to concentrate power in the very hands of society. And as a matter of fact one finds that in a later book, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, published in 1945, Niebuhr complains that the pessimism which prompts and justifies the policy of investing the State with uncontrolled power is not consistent, ' for it is not applied, as it should be, to the ruler.' [2] He favours now the ' democratic techniques of a free society ' which ' place checks upon the power of the ruler and administrator and thus prevent it from being vexatious.' [3] But there is a complication which blunts the edge of this confession, for in Niebuhr's terminology Marxism does not rank as undemocratic. On the contrary, it is regarded as radical democracy as distinct from liberal democracy,[4] and both as idealistic are children of the light over against the children of darkness who are characterized by moral cynicism and exemplified in recent history by Nazi Germany. On the other hand, both liberalism and Marxism, although they are democratic, have this deficiency in common that if they do not have the malice of cynicism they are thoroughly infected by stupidity. Marxism is as prone as liberalism to assume the shape and character of an oligarchy, and the ultimate cause is that both are much too easily optimistic, and in this connexion easy optimism is the very hallmark of stupidity. The fundamental error of our modern age is not after all the individualism of liberalism, but the sheer optimism of both liberalism and Marxism. ' Perhaps,' says Niebuhr,[5] ' the most remarkable proof of the power of this optimistic creed which underlies democratic thought is that Marxism, which is ostensibly a revolt against it, manages to express the same optimism in another form.' As between them it may be that Marxism is to be preferred on account of its realization of the human need of community, but this advantage is overshadowed by their common deficiency, for, as Niebuhr has it,[6] ' Marxism expects men to be as tame and social on the other side of the revolution as Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham thought them to be tame and prudential on this side of the revolution.' ' Democracy requires something more than a religious devotion to moral ideals. It requires religious humility.' [7] And that means amongst other things an unfailing readiness to submit to examination and criticism our moral and social principles [8] and all our systems of order and justice.

This, of course, brings us very much closer to the authentic Niebuhr of to-day, who is pre-eminently a theologian, and the process of development is carried a stage further in *Faith and History* (1949) where he allows that society is capable of a limited but real measure of moral renewal [9] and gives as a significant instance the transformation whereby in ' many of the most healthy of modern nations ' absolute monarchies, bowing before the storms of opposition, became constitutional monarchies instead, finding that their ' powerlessness provided the community with a new form of power, which was completely compatible with the requirements of a more democratic justice.' [10] Niebuhr has travelled a long way indeed between *Moral Man and Immoral Society* on the one hand and *Faith and History* on the other. It is as if his political thought and his theology were two separate streams which, each passing under many bridges, finally become one that is both broad and deep.

There remains a question, however, whether this confluence of thought has involved corresponding changes of emphasis in Niebuhr's religious thinking. We have already seen that, writing in 1939, just before the delivery of Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures, Principal Baillie was able to describe him as theologically indebted to Karl Barth, and the question is therefore whether Niebuhr may still fairly be regarded as a Barthian. There is no doubt of course that he has learned from Barth, as indeed all contemporary theology which professes to be alive has learned. The dire events of our troubled twentieth century have conspired with Karl Barth to render the liberal theology against which he is essentially in revolt outdated and outmoded. It is not only Barth but our Western experience of life in these times which has barred the way against any easy return to liberalism in theology. But theology can learn from Barth and can at the

[1] *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 159 f.
[2] *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, p. vi.
[3] *Ib.*, p. vi.
[4] Cf. *ib.*, 29.
[5] *Ib.*, 28.
[6] *Ib.*, 46.
[7] *Ib.*, 104.
[8] Cf. *ib.*, 58.
[9] Cf. *Faith and History*, p. 254 ff.
[10] *Ib.*, 257.

same time, without evincing any tendency to return to liberalism, make a decisive departure from the essentially Barthian standpoint. This is so because (*a*) Barth recognizes the transcendent greatness of God, the first importance therefore of the divine initiative and the divine revelation, and the universal corruption wrought in man by sin so that revelation must be thought of as creating its own response ; but (*b*) he recognizes these in such an absolute and one-sided fashion that the object of God's love seems to vanish before our eyes.

The decisive point in this connexion is the manner in which revelation is conceived as creating its own response ; and it is clear that Barth pictures it very much after the fashion of a creation out of nothing. According to Barth, in other words, the object of God's love is little better than empty space ; and it is here that theologians who have considerable sympathy with Barth are compelled to part company with him. Of these perhaps Emil Brunner is chief and his main concern is to add some substance to the object of divine grace. He does this by recognizing as a point of contact what he calls the formal *imago*, not the content in any degree of our humanity, but its bare form, our formal rationality and responsibility. This, of course, is a step in the right direction, but it is no more than a step. Indeed, it is so short a step that it leaves Brunner in a far less stable position than Barth himself. All that we have on the human side of the divine-human encounter, as a point of contact for divine grace, is an academic abstraction, not the world which God so loves, but no more than the ghost of humanity.

What then has been Niebuhr's position in relation to this problem ? This is not an easy question to answer for Niebuhr is not always consistent with himself, but the final outcome of the impressive argument in the Gifford Lectures seems to be very much the same as Brunner's conclusion. Where the latter speaks of a form which has lost its proper content, Niebuhr talks of a structure which completely lacks its corresponding perfection ; and if he does contrive to go somewhat beyond the Continental theologian's position it is largely by the addition of a shadow to Brunner's ghost of humanity, a shadow, though ghosts have no shadows, in the shape of a thoroughly uneasy, a completely bad conscience—and that seems to be a contradiction in terms. There are, of course, some statements in these Lectures which suggest a more substantial point of contact for God's self-revelation, but on the whole this is the considered position which Niebuhr adopts.

And yet Niebuhr persistently gives the impression that he intends to do very much more than this. Indeed, it is scarcely too much to say that there is another Niebuhr who lurks behind the scenes in the Gifford Lectures but comes out more into the open in his latest book, *Faith and History*. It seems that when Niebuhr starts with the central doctrines of the Christian faith he finds it difficult to escape from Barth and not easy to go beyond Brunner ; but he knows perfectly well that Brunner has stopped short of the truth. On the other hand, when Niebuhr gives his attention to questions of Christian morals and practical philosophy he succeeds in adumbrating a much more defensible position than either Barth's or Brunner's ; and this is evident from the argument of *Faith and History*.

Here Niebuhr's intention is to give an account of the Christian interpretation of history and to distinguish it from those of classicism and modernism ; and to his understanding of it there are two main sides : (i) that history is a process, and that within it there are indefinite possibilities of progress and fulfilment ; and (ii) that none the less these historical fulfilments are always provisional, tentative, and proximate, and that the final fulfilment of history lies beyond history and is the object of the eschatological expectation of Christian faith. There is both despair and optimism in this outlook, despair of any final fulfilment within history itself, optimism regarding the indefinite progress that is none the less possible ; and these are held together because every new progressive achievement is brought under the judgment that, perversely setting man at its centre, it falls short of the best that God has designed. This Christian view of history obviously represents a very finely balanced perspective, and it is not surprising that time and again the balance has been lost and Christian thought has fallen on one side or the other of its true position. Moreover, although this Christian view is certainly known only to faith which involves repentance, it is capable of a limited rational validation, positive and negative. It is rationally intelligible, and it makes contact positively and negatively with what other men believe. It is, as Principal Fulton said in a review,[1] ' rationally relevant.'

Now the picture here portrayed represents a considerable advance upon the earlier account of a structure completely lacking its corresponding virtue and perfection which none the less persists, not indeed as realization, but as requirement only. It is much nearer the truth to acknowledge the validity both of the moral insight and of the achievements of ordinary men, and yet to see these coming under the judgment both of God and of the ultimate ideal. This is not indeed for Niebuhr

[1] THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, lxi. 138.

an entirely new view for in some ways it is a reiteration of what he said in a much earlier work, *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, and yet there are significant differences to be discovered. In particular, it is clear that while adhering to a profound combination of pessimism and optimism Niebuhr has shed the moral cynicism, especially in relation to collective behaviour, which was so prominent in *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and found a place too in *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*.[1] In its place there is now in *Faith and History* an important admission of the possibility of fulfilment on the collective level as well as the individual [2]; there is a commendable recognition of communal virtue [3]; and there is finally an acknowledgment of the virtue that communities may have *by grace*,[4] that is, by the identity of direction obtaining between their imperfect purposes and a higher good than they are ready to serve.

All this marks, if not a significant change of emphasis, a significant development of thought. But if in loyalty to the truth as he apprehends it Niebuhr has allowed himself to go so far should he not have allowed himself to go much farther in his Gifford Lectures than he actually did? If he allows that the Christian faith is capable even of a limited rational validation should he not also allow that the Christian revelation makes contact in man with considerably more than an academic abstraction? If he allows in history itself and in ordinary life even tentative and provisional fulfilments, on the collective as well as the individual level, should he not regard these as affording a point of contact for that divine grace through which alone can come the final fulfilment of all life and history? Indeed, has not Niebuhr stopped short in the process of integrating his theological insights on the one hand and his moral and political insights on the other? On the other hand, and at the same time, has he not been working in the direction of the truth? Is it not in fact a major task of contemporary theology to affirm the ethical pessimism of a profound Christian insight without affirming at the same time a moral cynicism which has been refuted again and again? For does not the work of grace confirm, condemn and transform in a single act all our virtues and aspirations, bringing them into captivity to the will of Christ and centring them not in man but in God?

[1] Cf. *An Interpretation of Christian Ethics*, 150, 189.

[2] Cf. *Faith and History*, 243 f.

[3] Cf. *ib.*, 251.

[4] Cf. *ib.*, 252 ff.

Recent Foreign Theology

Worship in the Early Church. The pen of Professor O. Cullmann is rarely still, and there can be few living New Testament scholars who are more productive. He has now published a revised and enlarged edition of a work first published in 1944, dealing with the Early Church and Worship [1]—of part of which a French translation has appeared in the meantime.[2] In the first part he considers the variety of the forms of the worship—the breaking of bread, reading of Scripture, preaching, praise, confession of faith, prayer, benediction, baptism—and shows that all was directed to the building up of the Body of Christ. The second part is devoted to studies in the Fourth Gospel, dealing *inter alia* with the Baptism of Jesus, the Marriage at Cana, the Cleansing of the Temple, the conversations with Nicodemus and the Woman of Samaria, the Healings at Bethesda and the Pool of Siloam, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, and the Foot-washing. Here the new edition contains some sections which were not in the old, and the author takes the opportunity to reply to positions taken against him by Professor W. Michaelis. The new edition has Scripture and author indexes, neither of which were found in the first.

[1] *Urchristentum und Gottesdienst* [2] (*Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments*) [1950]. Zwingli Verlag, Zürich.

[2] *Le culte dans l'Eglise primitive.*

The Dual Nature of the Church. To the widespread debate as to the nature and authority of the Church, J. J. Leuba contributes a study which attempts to reconcile Catholic and Protestant positions.[3] He argues that just as our Lord was Son of David and Son of Man, with 'institutional' and 'spiritual' titles, so the Church is both an institution with inalienable privileges, and a spiritual fellowship. He finds two sorts of apostolate in the New Testament, represented particularly by Paul and the Twelve, and claims that both institutional and charismatic apostolates are

[3] *L'Institution et l'Evénement* (*Bibliothèque Théologique*) [1950]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchatel and Paris; Swiss Fr. 6.50.

essential to the Church. The evidence for the former is less precise or convincing than could be desired, and the reviewer must confess his astonishment at reading: 'According to the testimony of the Gospels, the election of the Twelve confers an *indelible character*, which nothing can efface . . . , not even treason,' with a reference to Judas as 'one of the Twelve' in Mt 26[14]. It would seem that even Pope Alexander VI could here find one to defend his title to be a pillar of the true Church. While the eirenic purpose of the book is to be commended, its overstatement of the 'institutional' case must seriously reduce its effect.

The Offering of Isaac. A valuable study in the history of interpretation has been published by David Lerch, devoted to the interpretation of Gn 22, which narrates the story of the narrowly averted offering of Isaac.[1] After an introduction in which the methods of the study are set out, the author deals first with the way the Rabbis, Philo, and Josephus deal with this story, and then carries through the study of Christian interpretation from the second century to the middle of the twentieth. Of the difference of approach to the Biblical text in different ages or by different writers most students are aware; but it is always illuminating to study the results obtained when a single passage is so differently approached. Of the labour involved in the assembly of this material the reviewer is well aware, but not less so of the profit of the study both for the author and his readers. At the beginning of each section the sources on which it is based are stated, and a very large number of interpreters are drawn on. Many of them are naturally and necessarily devoted to the typological and allegorical methods of interpretation which bring to the text what they seek to find in it, which is in some quarters again raising its head. They are here objectively examined in an excellent scholarly study.

Studies in Early Christianity. But recently a large book from the pen of Professor H. J. Schoeps was devoted to problems of Jewish Christianity.[2] This has been swiftly followed by a second substantial volume containing a number of studies on subjects within the field of the history of religion dealing with the early Christian period.[3] Thirteen subjects are dealt with, though three of them claim more than a single study. There are three studies devoted to Symmachus, dealing with Ebionite echoes in his translation, mythological echoes, and points of connexion between Symmachus and the Midrash. There are studies dealing with Jesus and the Jewish Law, with Paul as Rabbinic exegete, with Simon Magus as figuring possibly in the Haggada, with pre-history and demonology in the Pseudo-Clementines, with Gnostic Nihilism, and with the thought on the Election of Israel. Others must be passed over without mention; nor can the contribution of the author to the subjects mentioned be recorded here. It must suffice to say that to all he brings immense learning, and a wide command of the literature, both ancient and modern, so that his studies are of the highest value for their factual content no less than for his interpretation of the facts. The subjects with which he deals lie off the beaten track, so that the material here assembled is largely the fruit of original research not available elsewhere.

Child Problems among the Arabs. The gifted Finnish scholar, Dr. Hilma Granqvist, is widely known for her two volumes on *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village* and her work on *Birth and Childhood among the Arabs*. She has now published a sequel to the latter, dealing with child problems among the Arabs.[4] Like its predecessors this volume is written in excellent English, and it embodies material which she gathered during her stay in an Arab home in the village of Artas, near Bethlehem. Indeed part of it was actually written before the War. It contains five chapters, dealing with the naming of children and the principles observed, the number and distribution of children and child mortality, the welfare and ailments of children, the value set on children, and their environment in home and family. The whole abounds in intimate insights into life and custom, and is of the highest value and interest. Its value to students of the Bible may be seen from the fact that ten quarto pages are filled with Biblical references to which parallels are presented in this volume and its predecessor. Its purpose, however, is less to illustrate the Bible than to depict the life of an Arab village to-day. There are some pages more directly devoted to the Bible, in which Dr. Granqvist rejects the common supposition that Hebrew families were large. There are eighty

[1] *Isaaks Opferung christlich gedeutet: eine auslegungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (*Beiträge zur historischen Theologie*, No. 12) [1950]. Mohr, Tübingen; DM 25.60.

[2] *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums.*

[3] *Aus frühchristlicher Zeit: Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* [1950]. Mohr, Tübingen; DM. 21.

[4] *Child Problems among the Arabs: Studies in a Muhammadan Village in Palestine* [1950]. Söderström, Helsingfors and Munksgaard, Copenhagen.

pages of notes, a good bibliography, and much precise statistical information given in an appendix.

The Minor Prophets in Modern Greek. Professor B. M. Vellas is pressing forward with exemplary speed in his task of providing a scholarly commentary on the Old Testament in Modern Greek. The fifth volume has now appeared, and it brings to an end the study of the Minor Prophets, with which the author began. This volume deals with Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.[1] Like its predecessors it gives a brief introduction to each Book, and a good bibliography of the international literature dealing with it, a modern translation of the text, followed by the Septuagint version, and a full commentary, which is less notable for original positions than for mediating to its readers the results of modern study, and especially German study. The main critical problem in these books concerns the integrity of Zechariah, and here the author follows the usual view that separates the last five chapters from the first eight.

Tobit, Judith, Esther, and Baruch. The latest volume of the *Echter-Bibel*, which is a brief Roman Catholic Commentary on the Bible written in German, comes from the pens of Professor F. Stummer and Dr. V. Hamp. The former deals with the Books of Tobit, Judith, and Esther, while the latter deals with the Book of Baruch.[2] There are short introductions to each Book, and brief but judicious notes on the text. More importance is probably attached by the editor to the new translation of the text, which occupies rather more space than the notes. Esther is attributed to the end of the Persian period or the beginning of the Greek, Tobit to the second century B.C., Judith to the latter part of the first century B.C., and Baruch to a date prior to the Psalms of Solomon in the first century B.C. Professor Stummer recently published a short monograph on the geography of the Book of Judith,[3] and the fruits of his study are included in summary form here.

Ezra and Nehemiah. Roman Catholic Biblical scholarship is active in many countries, and amongst them is Spain, where for ten years scholarly journals devoted to Biblical [4] and Hebrew [5] studies have been published. Now the Spanish Jesuit, Professor A. Fernández, who is at the Biblical Institute in Rome, has published a large commentary on Ezra and Nehemiah in Spanish.[6] He gives a good introduction, prints the text in Spanish translation, and offers a full commentary. Probably the most important part of the volume will be found in the special notes, distributed throughout the work, devoted to questions that require fuller treatment, such as the authenticity of the royal decrees, the Aramaic documents, and the chronological problem of the order of the work of Ezra and Nehemiah. Altogether there are eighteen of these special notes, of which the longest is devoted to the chronological problem already mentioned. Here the author rejects the solution advanced more than half a century ago by Van Hoonacker, and decides for the traditional view, while recognizing that certainty is not attainable. His commentary is throughout a work of independent scholarship, meriting the attention of scholars, and even where his conclusions are not accepted his fair discussion of issues will be valued.

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[1] ΑΓΓΑΙΟΣ, ΖΑΧΑΡΙΑΣ, ΜΑΛΑΧΙΑΣ [1950]. Astēr, Athens.

[2] *Die Heilige Schrift in deutscher Übersetzung: Das Alte Testament*, Lieferung 11: *Tobit, Judit, Ester*, by Friedrich Stummer, and *Baruch*, by Vinzenz Hamp [1950]. Echter Verlag, Würzburg.

[3] *Geographie des Buches Judith.*

[4] *Estudios Bíblicos.*

[5] *Sefarad.*

[6] *Comentario a los libros de Esdras y Nehemías* [1950]. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid.

Printed in Scotland by Morrison & Gibb Limited, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to The Editor, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.